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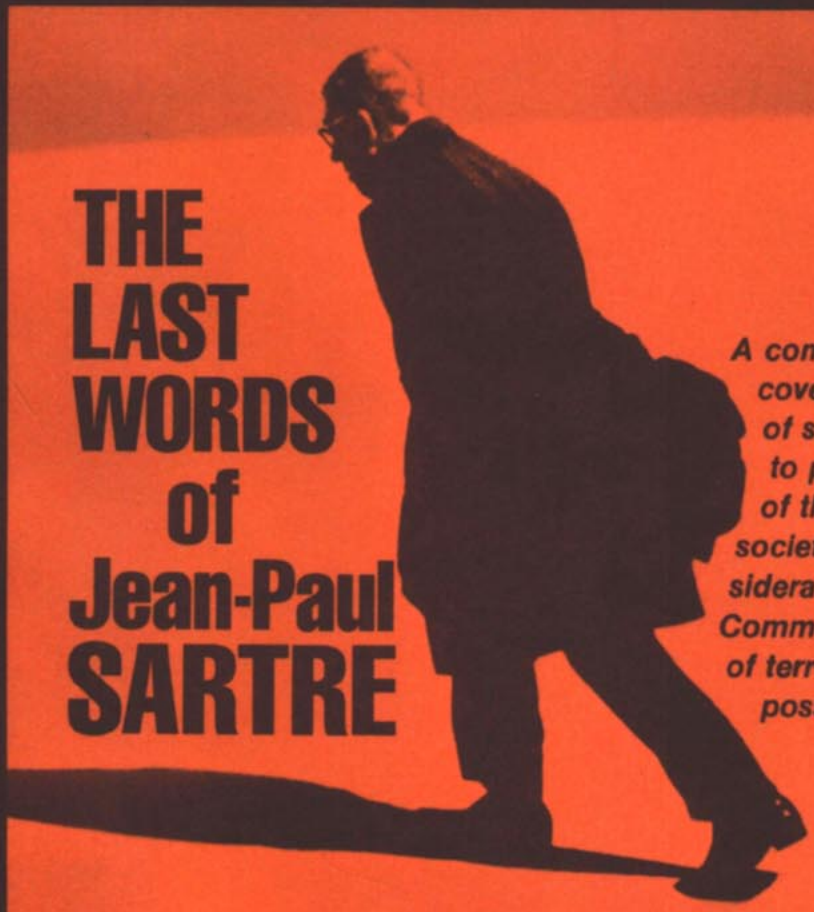

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An Open Letter to Prime Minister Begin

J. L. Talmon

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BENNY LÉVY, a young writer, was Jean-Paul Sartre's secretary and close collaborator in the years since 1974. The two were in the habit of working together four times a week, from 11:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.

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JERRY WATTS is writing a dissertation on the political sociology of ethnically marginal black intellectuals, probing especially why those who have felt dual cultural allegiances have sought refuge in the left. □

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To Our Readers

It's become an old American custom by now, like Mother's Day and the Fourth of July. Every two years *Dissent* sends out an SOS to its friends and says: "Do you want us to continue? Then please help us with a contribution. People have to pay for their convictions!"

This year we have an important new fact to announce. *Dissent* is now being published by the Foundation for the Study of Independent Social Ideas (FSISI), 505 Fifth Avenue, New York 10017. All contributions should be made out to the Foundation (you may abbreviate your check to read: FSISI). *All contributions are tax deductible.*

We're now in our 27th year, and going strong; our circulation has increased significantly. But still, we have to turn to you, our readers, and ask for money. Our goal is

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Michael Harrington

To the Auto Workers' Union

This past June, at Anaheim, California, the United Automobile Workers' Union held its 26th constitutional convention. Almost a third of its membership has been left jobless as a result of the recession and the poor planning of the auto corporations. At this convention one of the speakers was Michael Harrington, chair of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee and a member of the Dissent *editorial board. Here is a slightly abbreviated transcript of his speech.*—EDS.

Let me start by saying something that most of you know much better than I, that we are meeting here in the middle of the worst economic and social crisis in the United States in the last 50 years. Either we are going to go beyond Franklin Roosevelt, beyond the New Deal and the Fair Deal and the Great Society and the New Frontier, or we are going back to Hoover. That's the choice we face today, and it's a more fundamental one than we've had in a long time.

What I want to do today is, first of all, talk very briefly about why we are where we're at; second, talk of what we should do to get out of where we're at; and third, how this affects your politics.

One last work of introduction. Martin Gerber [a vice-president of the UAW] said that I'm a democratic socialist. That's absolutely right, and I want to be up front about it. Please listen to me, though, even if you disagree with my political philosophy. Listen because we are not going to get out of this crisis by thinking as usual.

The conventional liberal wisdom of the last 50 years doesn't work anymore. It used to be said, "We'll fight inflation with a little unemployment; we'll fight unemployment with a little inflation." Now you have 7 million Americans out of work, 300,000 UAW members out of work, and 18 percent inflation. They're celebrating in the boardrooms—and some of the politicians are celebrating—that the prime rate the banks charge is going down. Do you know what it took to get that prime rate to go down? There were 1 million more unemployed people in the month of April in the United States, including some of you. We are in a crisis that is devastating entire cities and regions. Basic U.S. industries, such as steel and auto, are in very deep trouble.

I believe that the fundamental problem in this country is not simply its

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An Annual Prize

The Foundation for the Study of Independent Social Ideas (FSISI) announces an annual contest open to young writers (30 or under) for a reflective essay of between 4,000 and 8,000 words on any topic that reflects an independent study of social or political problems. An award of $500 will be made to the winner, and publication of the essay will be arranged in *Dissent*.

The closing date for entries in this first Annual FSISI Essay Contest is May 1, 1981, and will be, for the subsequent annual contests, every May 1 thereafter. The judges, whose decision is final, will be Irving Howe, Michael Walzer and Lewis Coser. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope must be enclosed or submissions will not be returned. For any further information write to the Foundation.

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economy but its politics, which are dominated by corporate power. The fundamental answer is to challenge that corporate power, economically and politically.

• Item: In November of last year, the *New York Times*, which is not exactly a radical publication, had an article entitled "American Myopia, Incorporated." It cited a report by the comptroller-general of the United States, which told us that Japanese businessmen think ". . . American firms are too preoccupied with making short-run profits," that they don't put their money into long-term development and design and quality. They chase their profits and you suffer. That is the way corporate domination of the economy hits you.

• Item: A conservative economist who was on Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers, not a particularly radical organization, told the Joint Economic Committee two years ago that the best thing the steel management of America could do for the American economy was to resign. He said that American steel management allowed all kinds of other countries to get a more advanced technology, that they never think of cutting prices, only raising them. And what happens as a result of that? The entire industrial region of the Middle West is being devastated because of that decision.

We have to rethink a society in which private decision-makers in a boardroom, maximizing their profits, can destroy jobs and communities. This union has got to say to the American society that those private decisions can no longer be considered private. We have to democratize those decisions.

Not only do these boardroom people make those private decisions that ruin lives but, more often than not, they get federal money to help them do it. Do you know that when a corporation runs out on you they usually get an investment tax credit wherever they go—a federal subsidy to move away and leave a community! And it doesn't stop there.

Do you realize that we put a hundred billion dollars into a highway program without thinking of what we're doing to the railroads or to mass transit? Now it seems that the federal highway system is our next Penn Central debacle; it didn't turn out to be the trucking artery that Congress said it would be. A hundred billion dollars, which helped change the economic and social geography of the United States, and yet the public was never really in on that decision.

Just the other week, according to *Business Week*, General Motors came out against a proposal to finance a new synthetic fuel plant that would put a surcharge on the utility bills in the area where the new plant was to be built. I'll give you one guess as to which corporation is the major user of that utility—General Motors. And what does GM say? Get the federal government to put up the money!

More and more big corporations want not only to make crucial decisions about our lives but also to risk our money doing it. That can't be tolerated.

Let me give you a final example. If there is to be a tax cut to deal with this

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terrible recession, people will say to give the tax cut to the companies so as to increase productivity and create more jobs. Look at the current issue of *Business Week*. The cover story is about robots in industry. It says General Electric has figured out how to cut its assembly force in half by introducing robots, knocking out 20,000 jobs. Do we need government subsidies in a time of recession in order to enable companies to produce more with fewer workers? I think not.

When Humphrey-Hawkins was originally proposed, the government was to get down to 3 percent unemployment 18 months after the bill was passed. That was watered down to 4 percent unemployment in five years. This January Jimmy Carter said that's too fast, we're going to get 5 percent unemployment seven years after the bill has been passed. On May 20 one of the most prominent conservative economists in the United States had an article in the *Wall Street Journal* in which he said that normal unemployment in the Untied States, in good times, is now 6 to 7 percent, and that for the next two or three years we have to have an 8 to 9 percent rate in order to deal with inflation.

Do you know what the unemployment rate was in the fall of 1970, when the American voters punished Richard Nixon and the Republicans for letting unemployment go so high? It was 4.9 percent.

Do you realize that now, in good times, we don't get down to what used to be called bad times? They are saying that this system cannot work without 6 million, 7, 8, or 9 million people out of work.

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Giant price-fixing multinational corporations, armed with government subsidies in their constant pursuit of the almighty dollar, have got us into a situation where we have simultaneously rising unemployment and soaring prices. We are entering an Orwellian world where peace is war, where slavery is freedom, a situation, indeed, where prosperity is recession.

Senator Kennedy talks about something very important. We need a program for nothing less than the reindustrialization of the United States. But that's not just going to happen; business won't do it unless we give them the money and let them make the decisions, and that's *not* the way to do it.

Let me give you an example of what we could do. Right now, the Japanese solar water-heater industry has got a $350 million market. Japan has a program to get solar energy and air-conditioning into 10 million Japanese homes by 1995, which is one-fourth of the homes in Japan.

Do you know who owns the biggest solar-energy corporations in America right now? Shell Oil, Atlantic Richfield, and Exxon. Do you want solar energy designed by Shell Oil? Do you want Exxon to get the sun? I'll tell you what they'll do with the sun. They'll make a centralized capital-intensive technology that they can control.

What we need is solar energy on a human scale that individuals and communities can use, a solar energy that people in Bangladesh and Tanzania can use, a solar energy that's labor-intensive, a full-employment solar energy. This means that we have to have at least one public energy corporation in this country.

Let me give you another example of what we can do. Let's build a railroad

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system in the United States, in the Northeast and the Midwest, that by the year 2,000 will be as efficient as the present railroad system in Italy and in France. Do you think we can put hundreds of thousands of people to work catching up with Italy and France?

What we have to socialize in this country is something that is working and efficient and making a profit. Don't demand public ownership of money-losing automobile plants! I don't want the workers to own the lemons, and the corporations to own the productive enterprises. Business always wants the government to nationalize a losing business. They always want to give us the lemons and the turkeys. We have to change the real structure of American society in this regard.

I have no illusions, and I'm sure President Fraser has no illusions, about how much will be accomplished by one union person on the board of directors of Chrysler. But that is the beginning of something tremendously important. That is the beginning of the proposition that the decisions made in the boardroom have to be open to the public. I hope Doug Fraser will spill the beans all over the United States about what's going on there.

Finally, what does all this have to do with our politics?

This convention has to commit itself to a struggle during the 1980s. We are in a crisis that is not going to be resolved by one election. We are in a long, profound crisis that is going to take a basic commitment from us. And in following this out politically all you have to do is what your union has done so magnificently under Walter Reuther, Leonard Woodcock, and now Doug Fraser—engage in coalition politics.

Reach out. Reach out to blacks and browns and women and the environmentalists. Reach out to the Third World, because the people in the Third World are not your enemies. The multinational corporations that exploit them are your enemies.

We're the only advanced industrial country in the world without National Health Insurance. Maybe we ought to look at what our friends in Canada and the NDP—the Democratic party—have done. They have brought National Health to Canada, first in Saskatchewan and then in the entire country. But however we proceed technically, the point is coalition.

I say in conclusion that this United Automobile Workers' Union is one of the finest institutions of practical idealism in the history of the United States. It has accomplished wonders, and not simply for automobile workers and farm implement workers and aerospace workers. It has done wonders for the entire country.

But this union is now facing a challenge that is the most profound since it was organized, back in the '30s.

The challenges of today require us to stand up to corporate power and demand the democratization of the corporation in the economy and the politics of this society. Only then will social justice survive, working people overcome, and democracy prevail. □

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The Polish Workers

September 4, 1980

The Polish workers fought for themselves and their families and won a victory for all of us. In coming issues of *Dissent* we will try to report extensively on the social basis and political meaning of that victory. Here (we are about to go to press) it is only necessary to pay tribute to the men and women of Gdansk and Szczecin and Lodz and the mining towns of Silesia who defied their masters and the foreign masters of their masters and testified so bravely to the value of freedom.

Their success is fragile and uncertain; their fight is not over. Already, no doubt, party bureaucrats are plotting the destruction of the new trade unions, for no power is so threatening to the Communist party as the organized power of the workers. But look at what has already been achieved! Against all the odds, against the supposedly growing, almost hegemonic power of the Soviet Union, against the totalitarian regime, against the modern state, a few hundred thousand workers have, for the moment at least, prevailed. In the face of the most advanced forms of repression, they have used, and used successfully, the oldest weapons: human solidarity and steadfastness.

What are we to think of their enemies? Clearly, the power of the Soviet Union is more limited than it looked (especially to American neoconservatives) only a few weeks ago. Nationalism and religion and, we can now see, the historic traditions of social democracy: all these are possible bases of opposition and resistance. In Eastern Europe, Russian imperialism is highly vulnerable. Force can always be brought to bear, certainly, but the use of force is costly, and more costly the more often it is necessary. Similarly, the totalitarian regime is vulnerable. Its structures of control are far less pervasive than they would have to be to sustain indefinitely a corrupt, brutal, and inefficient government. And even the modern state, with all its technology, instant communication, advanced weaponry, and computer planning, still requires some minimal degree of consent and compliance from its subjects—and can't survive without it. So there is room for maneuver, room for intelligence and courage, even in the age of superpowers and centralized bureaucracies.

And freedom is still the most dangerous creed of all. Independent unions, social self-defense, the end of censorship: it is above all the *right of opposition* that the Polish workers have asserted, the essential right of a liberal society. Without legal opposition, socialism can never be anything but a pretense and a new form of tyranny. Leftists in the West have sometimes forgotten that simple fact of political life, but no one is likely to forget it who has actually to live under a government that claims to be immune from criticism, all-powerful, and ideologically correct. No government that rules unopposed will be "correct," or even decent, for long.

It remains now to build the institutions of freedom and to bring into them the mass of Polish workers. Given the geography of Poland, that won't be easy. In fact, it isn't easy anywhere, even here in the United States—despite the complacent praise heaped on the Poles by Carter and Reagan. Even here, where the right of opposition is firmly established, large numbers of workers are still unprotected by unions of their own. Social self-defense is a difficult business, a long and continuing struggle. Advances are made in this country, and in that one, often at unexpected times and in unexpected places. Now the Polish workers show the way. All honor to them!

—M. W. □

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So Whom Are You Going to Vote for?

We asked Dissent *editors whom they, as individuals, were going to vote for. Some threw up their hands, some groaned, some wrote a few words. Here is a representative sample of those who wrote their personal opinions* — EDS.

Irving Howe

With no enthusiasm whatever, and with knowledge of all the legitimate criticisms that can be made of his presidency, I suppose I'll vote for Carter. My candidate has already lost—in the Democratic primaries. Kennedy had some major disabilities, ranging from his personal record to a blustery style, but he did speak for valued liberal positions. I hope he keeps on, after the election.

Still, voting isn't a way of registering one's full ideological stance; it is simply a choice among candidates available. I don't like John Anderson. I don't like his upper-middle-class stance of being "above" bread-and-butter class issues, his seeming claim that just because he can speak a complete sentence that qualifies him for the presidency. He articulates no issues, he represents no constituency. And he has a bad record on issues that matter to labor.

So I'll vote for Carter, probably. Among lesser-evils, he's one of the lesser. OK; that's where we are. But don't the following matter?

- That the next president is likely to appoint three or four Supreme Court justices and the thought of whom Reagan might select gives one the chills?
- That the Republicans have taken a formal stand in favor of a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion?
- That labor people in Washington say they at least have some entry with the Carter administration even though they deplore most of its domestic policies?

CARTER IS an opportunist, a man without deep convictions, and a character who casts over himself a smarmy aura of piety. But we're in a period of considerable social retreat, and insofar as we're talking about the election, we can only choose among the possibilities.

What matters at least as much is whether the shattered liberal-left coalition can find the energy and thoughtfulness to restructure itself for the battles of the 1980s—battles that will probably be directed, to one or another extent, against whichever party holds office. □

Cynthia Fuchs Epstein

I want to vote for Ted Kennedy. I am hoping that by writing this statement [written before the Democratic convention] I will be creating a bandwagon effect and that others will follow suit. I'm sitting at the typewriter wishing that the pressing of the keys will be the start of a Kennedy bandwagon (will wishing make it so?). I want Kennedy because he offers programs that will serve women, blacks, the poor, labor, and the cities. My "trickle up" theory. I think that what is good for these groups will be good for the nation. Maybe even the rich (the modestly rich). But this is my fantasy option. I don't suppose Kennedy will be on the ballot, so my real choice is to vote for Anderson or Carter.

I have interviewed associates and friends. They are generally in a "least/worst" frame of mind. The most practical lean toward Carter because people cringe at "throwing" the election to Reagan by siphoning off Carter votes to Anderson. Taxi drivers like Reagan and taxi drivers are supposed to be the political weather vanes of New Yorkers.

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The practical are uncomfortable because they don't like Carter's ineptitude over inflation, energy, and foreign policy any better than do the taxi drivers. Personally, I am angered at his weasel actions on behalf of the Equal Rights Amendment (if our friends don't put their money where there mouths are, what can we expect from our enemies?) and his move to register young men.

But if Anderson sounds good, and has the support of the high school and college youth I talk to, as well as some of my liberal colleagues, and he appears the unsullied, white-haired version of the Kennedy liberal package (though left-liberals grimace at an economic policy grounded in his Republican principles; nobody's perfect), we are playing poor odds if we back an untrained Luke Skywalker against the Republican Darth Vader.

Infuriated by the Republican platform directives to kill the Equal Rights Amendment and legal abortion, I was prepared to go into the voting booth and press the Carter lever and not tell anybody about it. I didn't convince my father in 1948 to turn from Harry Truman, the "practical" vote against Dewey, and cast one for sentiment and principle and Henry Wallace. At this moment, I am letting myself be recruited for Anderson by my son. I want to support the first commitment to ideology I hear from his generation. But beyond that, I fear it is a crisis of principle and a crisis of energy in the source of principle that brings us to leadership by the antidemocratic forces in our midsts. I think Anderson stands for the forces of equality and justice. He probably won't be given a chance to work out the details, but I trust he would have done so in ways acceptable to liberal sentiment.

Better to vote for Anderson and live unashamed. □

Robert Lekachman

If Carter squeaks through it will be on the basis of policies, foreign and domestic, scarcely distinguishable from those of Ronald Reagan. From this glum proposition flows the implication that the sensible course for radicals is support for neither major party candidate and deliberate choice of the alternative contender who is most likely to shake up a manifestly decaying two-party system.

Barry Commoner is intelligent, enlightened, and very close to DSOC positions on such matters as income and wealth distribution, and democratic planning. In a less conservative time and place, he would be a strong contender for the presidency. For a spell, our Swedish friends enjoyed the services of Olaf Palme as their prime minister, an intellectual as unabashed as Commoner.

Apparently the Citizens' party is going nowhere this year. Enter, therefore, John Anderson. The man himself is marginally preferable to Reagan or Carter, but the point of a vote for him is, I believe, not so much his individual merit as the opportunity, as George Wallace was wont to say, to send a message to both Democrats and Republicans and in particular the first-named. A country in as deep economic and social trouble as the United States cannot longer endure the dubious luxury of two conservative parties and no credible representative of the interests of the country's working majority.

We shall probably need to brace ourselves to endure four more years of Carter or, for better or worse, a spell of Reagan. On the cheerful assumption that we shall somehow survive the experience, I shall hope that Anderson makes a strong showing and that the consequences for 1984 will be benign. □

Stanley Plastrik

About half an hour after the California polls close on Tuesday, November 4, Walter Cronkite will put some numbers into his network's monster computer, press a button, and come up with the projected winner of America's dreariest and most frustrating electoral campaign. Writing this in mid-July, before either party convention—despite the poll predictions—I think the name most likely to emerge is Carter. This may be wishful fantasy on my part, an unwillingness to face the prospect of a Reagan victory. But it is hard to accept the possibility that the electorate has moved off its moderately progressive base so far to the right that it is ready to accept a Goldwaterish-ideological program built around demagogic single issues (Anti-ERA, Anti-Abortion), along with commitments tantamount to relaunching a general armaments race and starting to dismantle the welfare state.

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WHY CARTER? Because it does make a difference, and at times (most times) there is no alternative to the policy of "lesser-evilism." Can it be maintained that it made no "difference" that Nixon was elected rather than Humphrey? That, even if we acknowledge the sobering effect the office has, it makes no "difference" if Reagan becomes president? And can we truly say that the demoralized, confused Democratic party is the "same" as the arrogant, puffed-up Republican party? The purpose of the strategy of "lesser-evilism" is two-fold: to avoid the worst possibility (Reagan)—and to place oneself in the best possible position to exert influence on proposals and events (Carter). One need not maintain this is either a subtle or profound strategy; only that sometimes the simplest and most obvious proposition is the right one. □

Michael Walzer

In a Bad Time

I can't recall a time when it was as easy as it is today to glance at the headlines of the morning paper and turn quickly to the sports pages. The presidential campaign is only the most obvious reason for a general depression about political life. On the right, there is some vitality and enthusiasm. But on the left, everything that makes commitment exciting and worthwhile seems for the moment to be missing: a sense of possibility, collective *esprit*, programmatic vigor, and intelligence. We have enemies, to be sure, dangerous but not frightening; they don't inspire us either. And now the easeful and despairing notion has begun to circulate that our conservative enemies are really not so different from our liberal friends. Why bother, then, with everyday politics? It is a good time to plan a research project, cultivate the garden.

Among the few remaining activists, the only politics that has much appeal is one of negation and avoidance. Simultaneously anticorporatist and antistatist, it represents a new version of *laissez faire*. Vietnam, Three Mile Island, Love Canal: these are the landmarks of contemporary political militancy. They symbolize what corporations and governments do to people, and the call of the activists is simply that they stop doing it. Don't conscript us. Don't contaminate us. Leave us alone. The dominant tone (of the antidraft demonstrations, for example) is more libertarian than socialist; the mood of participants seems more self-concern than solidarity. The newest political issues—energy, pollution, safety—are consumer issues, and consumers are private men and women above all; they don't readily organize themselves or publish manifestos. No cohesive popular movements, nothing like the labor and civil rights movements, loom behind the scattered protests of the last few years.

In these circumstances, the poor and the weak are especially vulnerable—to inflation, to recession, to the slow erosion of the welfare state. This is surely the critical fact of contemporary politics, and it is a revealing sign of our political condition that it is so often overlooked. The old movements of the left incorporated the poor and the weak. Now, these people are largely unspoken for; the activists are busy elsewhere. But the other America is still with us, and its members are still the most likely victims of whatever patchwork solutions the country finds for its more publicized difficulties.

FOR ALL THIS there are, as there always are, large-scale explanations that suggest the inexorability of historical process: advanced capitalism, new technology, the fiscal crisis of the welfare state. But I would suggest that our political depression also has more immediate causes. Whatever the long-term processes within which we are caught, it is the failures of the last decade that determine the shape of our politics right now. These failures "belong" to liberals and leftists as much as to anyone else, and they invite remedial action.

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• The first is a failure of policy. Perhaps the most extraordinary features of contemporary political culture is the collapse of the old American faith in problem-solving. The cynical humor of Murphy's law—whatever can go wrong, will—has been transformed into grim conviction. Nothing works the way it is supposed to work, good intentions lead invariably to disaster, governmental action makes everyone worse off. These are the central themes of neoconservative writing—as if our current difficulties were the result of radical experiments and political interventions and not of business as usual, corporate irresponsibility, and endless self-indulgence!

For years now, our government in fact has been weak, and its intention uncertain. Since President Johnson's Great Society collapsed amidst the debris of the Vietnam War, there have been no significant political initiatives in American life, no major legislative programs, no systematic efforts to foresee or cope with social and economic problems. Even the energy crisis produced only rhetorical boldness, while in practice the style of our leaders has been timid, indecisive, lazy. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that we would be better off than we are today had *any* energy policy, right or wrong, good or bad, been adopted and energetically pursued. Instead, everything is drift and flounder, when what we need—as the neoconservatives recognize readily enough when they address themselves to the private sphere—is a little public enterprise and daring.

• The second failure is a failure of cohesion and political organization. Things fall apart, old coalitions break up, the bonds of party fray and loosen, ethnic pluralism slides into mutual hostility. Our politics is marked by the isolation of interest groups and then by a fearful individualism. I'm not alright, Jack! Contemporary politicians, working with a small coterie of friends and hired p.r. men, search among these groups and individuals for a largely personal constituency—recruited one by one, as it were, through the mass media. Running for office became in the 1970s a distinctly private enterprise. Even Ted Kennedy, who tried to run on a program, never made a serious effort to build an organization or develop a consistent ideological position. One can imagine a campaign very different from his, carefully negotiated in advance, drawing interest groups together, aiming at a partisan and not a personal politics. Instead, Kennedy enlisted the clan and threw the dice, hoping to exploit discontent rather than to mobilize the discontented. But liberalism today depends upon mobilization, and that means upon program, party, loyalty, and leadership. Another occasion for public boldness.

• The third failure is a failure of vision. We lack a plausible and persuasive (let alone an interesting and imaginative) picture of the good society. The liberal-left lives off past hopes, cant phrases, promises that no one believes anymore. The sense of the future evoked by our best politicians, our most compassionate and benevolent politicians, is too radically dependent on the ideas of progress and affluence. A very modest egalitarianism founded on the easy premise of continual material improvement for everyone: this was the liberalism of the '40s, '50s, and '60s. For a while it seemed to work, it did work, and it brought important social gains. But this kind of liberalism reached a dead end in the '70s when it became clear that what was required for the sake of a good society was not expansion but redistribution.

If in coming years we are to sustain and develop the welfare state, it will be necessary to allocate costs as well as benefits, to think about power relations, to deal with real conflicts. And for this our best politicians have little stomach. It is our worst politicians who are on the offensive now, with their own visions of individualism, competition, and self-reliance. Only a counter-vision of equality and community can serve us. There are resources for such a counter-vision in the democratic and socialist traditions, but no one has yet put them to use. So we live without a future, day by day, defensively, too quick, I think, to anticipate frustration and defeat.

THESE FAILURES of the '70s suggest the work we have to do in the 80s. We need to think through in programmatic detail our own ways of coping with the immediate problems of inflation, unemployment, energy, and welfare. We need to help wherever we can in building liberal and leftist coalitions and in prodding those politicians nearest to us toward programmatic commitment. We need to defend the welfare state while at the same time thinking again about how its citizens can be mobilized and its burdens shared. And we need a vision larger than welfarism, one that is capable of evoking the spiritedness and devotion so obviously missing from public life today. □

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J. Patrick Dobel

Coterie Politics—Shape of Things Present

There is a new political formation in the United States—let's call it the coterie. It is rapidly becoming the most effective means for gaining and keeping political power. A tight group, it binds its members through strict loyalties and offers them the rewards—sometimes substantial—of close, usually exclusive access to a political leader. Coterie members perform most of the footwork in political campaigns and take a disproportionate role in the decisions of their leader once he is elected. They seem increasingly prevalent in the legislatures and executives across the country: e.g., Kennedy's "Irish Mafia," Nixon's "Berlin Wall," and Carter's "Georgia Mafia." Among the consequences of the coterie are both the travail of the American presidency and the chaos of our legislative process.

Coteries arise when parties and the old coalitions decay. The familiar reasons for the decline of political parties—

> a decline in patronage, an increase in primaries (reducing the party role in the nominating process), an increased use of television by candidates (minimizing the need for party volunteers), and passage of the federal election campaign law (which restricted party giving to federal candidates and heightened the impact of political action committees and single-issue groups). . . . [*Congressional Quarterly*, April 28, 1979.]

—all redound to the benefit of the coterie. In a media-dominated electoral politics, political arrangements tend to be ad hoc and instrumental. Little enduring trust, loyalty, or friendship connect politicians with other leaders and groups. Alliances are unstable and involve impersonal exchange relations on single-issue votes or money contributions. In such a milieu, coteries thrive. But while suited to win elections, they are not suited to govern.

"Kitchen cabinets" and "brain trusts" are traditional in our politics; but coteries are different. People may be motivated to work for a politician by ambition, affection, or commitment to policies; but they earn membership in the coterie because of their direct personal loyalty. People with autonomous policy commitments or independent power bases will normally be excluded, since their loyalty to the politician might be conditional. It is a symbiotic relation: the coterie members derive their power from access to the politician, while the politician depends on the coterie to provide the discretion, ideas, commitment, and energy necessary to gain power. And the coterie concerns itself perpetually with power maintenance, confusing the functions of politics with those of the campaign. Political staff and campaign staff merge, under both Carter and Nixon.

The coterie should be distinguished from mere political retainers recruited for campaigns. A fine study of the 1968 presidential campaign, *An Americ̣an Melodrama*,[1] characterized much of American politics as based on the principle of "bastard feudalism" traced in the historical work of K. B. McFarlane. Ambitious or idealistic "young men on the make" attach themselves to the entourage of "councillors, retainers, and servants, tailing off into those believed to be well-wishers." The relations between these "bastard feudatories" and the candidates are conditioned on mutual benefit, but the inner members of the coterie have to prove their loyalty and commitment *beyond* simple self-interest. Mitchell and Erlichman enjoyed membership in Nixon's coterie while Magruder and Dean were no more than "bastard feudatories."

At first glance, all this might seem to be no more than the development of new machines. Classical machines, however, depended on alliances of independent groups and power brokers able to mobilize predictable resources. Through favors and patronage, people are bound to a politician's faction by a combination of self-interest and loyalty. Within machines, independent groups bargain hard and arrive at a consensus with the politician and others. There are still political commitments and loyalties *beyond* the politician, welded together within the machine structure. Or so it was. Today, however, most of the instruments that build machines, especially patronage, are gone. (Only in rare cases can those older-style factions or machines develop. An emergent machine might be built on the basis of modified patronage fueled by massive federal funding and an alliance with remaining stable coalitions, as Coleman Young is attempting to do in Detroit. The immense personal economic power of the Rockefellers or Kennedys enables them to maintain a network of cronies by providing them with

[1] Lewis Chester, Godfrey Hodgson, and Bruce Page, *An Americ̣an Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968* (New York: Viking, 1969), pp. 210-14.

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sinecures in business or foundations and freeing them for political work when needed.)

Political survival has always required a small group of loyal supporters, but in the past politicians needed much more. Survival required votes on election day and the politicians needed parties, machines, local leaders of interest groups, money, and exposure to the voters. Politicians can no longer rely on clear and predictable voter ties either to parties or stable coalitions. Today some voters cluster around such high-intensity single issues as abortion or nuclear power; some remain tied to their party affiliation (weaker each year); some respond to careful constituent service; but most are not affiliated with political organizations and can only be touched through advertising or canvasing. All this is made to order for political coteries.

IN THIS NEW WORLD, political survival requires money. In the 1976 House elections the winners outspent the losers $42 million to $23 million; electoral success increasingly correlates with who spends the most money and gets the most media exposure. Coteries thrive in media-dominated elections that demand large sums of money and little political commitment. Their media tactics rely upon personality projection, targeted voters, a few symbolic issues, and temporary mobilization of normally acquiescent citizens. After the election, these unorganized citizens have no staying power and can be accommodated by constituent service as well as orchestrated use of the media. Without structured parties, machines, or coalitions, the voters have no way of getting accountability from the coterie. This, in turn, gives the coterie maximum freedom for maneuver.

One obvious source of coterie money is the drastic increase in independently wealthy candidates who enter the political arena from nowhere and proceed to buy an election. But there are other new sources. Direct government financing of candidates bypasses the parties and encourages coteries because money can be gotten with only a minimal show of public interest, often a simple petition; then the money can be used on the media with no strings attached. If funds were funneled through the party, politicians would have to maintain some clear contacts with party workers, preferences, and issues, thereby giving campaigns more coherence and accountability. Politicians can also gain sizable funds through the use of mailing lists. In exchange for vague ideological assurances and unredeemable pledges, candidates raise considerable funds involving no direct or continuous contact with donors. Instead, the possessor of the mailing list becomes a power broker, as Richard Viguerie has become in right-wing politics.

Finally, the new corporate and older trade association Political Action Committees (PACs) have revolutionized campaign financing in a way that is ideally suited for the coterie. Far outdistancing labor's capacity for fund-raising, these organizations raised over 20 million dollars in 1977 and 1978. This almost inexhaustible source of funds is ideal for the coterie: the contributors are organizations and prefer impersonal businesslike arrangements, they do not need or seek access to the circle of advisers, and the issue commitments they seek are minimal. True, they expect a tacit commitment not to support basic change in the economic order—a promise not hard to make for most American politicians. Most other commitments involve technical points that are usually resolved in subcommittees. That these commitments are hidden helps some coteries maintain the mirage of being "Populist."

Coteries also specialize in disposable campaign organizations. The archetype was John Kennedy's 1960 campaign, further perfected by Jimmy Carter in 1976. These coteries ignore the party remnants and set up a personal campaign apparatus manned by ambitious people and recruits from the "bastard feudalism" system. Most volunteers, especially activists, are galvanized by vital symbolic issues or the candidate's personality and settle for much smaller rewards than intimate access to their candidate. Thus the campaign can be run without disrupting the coterie. The few patronage jobs available seldom touch the coterie's inner circle, as the structure of the Carter campaign reveals. At the election's end, the grass-roots "organization" fades into an insubstantial shadow and presents no enduring organized pressure that would make the politician accountable; yet, it can be resurrected by the wand of media magic for the next campaign.

Single-issue groups can be accommodated by the coterie without much trouble. Its relation to such groups normally involves merely a pledge on a particular issue such as gun control. The political system, however, tends to sidetrack decisive political issues and such proposals as a constitutional amendment on abortion may never reach a full vote. Politicians can appease the single-issue groups without ever paying the full price with a public vote and seldom need to consult the group after the elections. Matters only get difficult when constituents on both sides of an issue are organized, for then taking a position loses as well as gains votes.

Coterie politics is a politics without program or platform. It is motivated by a desire to gain and

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maintain power, not by a comprehensive view of political life. Issues crest in waves waiting to be ridden by a coterie, or by an issue group (often itself a small coterie that has briefly become a media presence) that can form temporary alliances with a political coterie.

To the extent that coterie politics possesses an ideological dimension, it hurts the liberal or Democratic party coalitions. These coalitions depended upon unions, machines, effective state parties, and racial or ethnic blocks. In the past these groups had a stable presence in the political order, preferring a more personal style and demanding a greater degree of access to the politician as well as loyalty to the coalition's aims—all anathema to the coterie. They also sought a high visibility on issues and a more activist approach to politics.

By contrast, the new financing sources, single-issue groups, and disposable campaigning organizations involve limited commitment but high returns and demand little continuous activism—all far more congenial to the coterie. Most coterie politicians project an image of the antiparty, independent sham Populist, an illusion tailored to the media with its susceptibility to the symbolic gesture or personality details. This strategy deliberately undermines the party loyalties that are important to the Democrats and liberals.

COTERIE POLITICS divorces the methods of gaining power from those of governance. The methods by which the coterie wins elections are not related to those needed to educate the public or forge a working policy consensus between the executive and legislature. This fundamental flaw frustrates accountable democratic government. (Coterie politics has been foreshadowed by previous United States experience with partyless politics. V. O. Key's famous study, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), in chap. 14, characterizes the personalized and partyless politics of the Old South as an unstable "catch-as-catch-can politics," which was unaccountable, rife with favoritism and interest-group influence, biased against the unorganized have-nots, fraught with legislative paralysis, and vulnerable to demagogues.)

The consequences are most acute at the executive level. The political trials of President Carter's administration reflect the problems of an increasing number of mayors and governors who capture office with the help of a personal coterie. Entering the political arena with little experience, coterie politicians often have difficulties adjusting to the daily work of politics. The democratic politician must be able to fight, persuade and compromise with fellow politicians and constituencies, but never lose sight of the goals he or she seeks. Learned through experience, these skills are seldom found in either the coterie or its leader, since the skills are seldom needed to get elected. The casual observation that most higher political office-holders have had previous experience misses this point: for many coteries bent on higher office, there is no incentive to develop political skills.

To exercise power effectively the coterie would have to change and be more open and flexible. Alliances would have to be made with external coalitions and legislative caucuses. The inner circle would have to be opened up to leaders of various power groupings, and the politician would personally have to work with peers and power brokers. The coterie would need to add "old pros" and "insiders" who knew the ropes and possessed independent connections in the political world. All these would make the leader more effective but would also mean new members of the team and more enduring political commitments.

Coterie leadership also distorts executive decision-making by concentrating it in a small group. The executive office, and especially the institutionalization of the presidency, tends to insulate the leader. The already closed nature of the coterie when taking office reinforces rather than works against the well-documented pressures to close off and isolate the leader. The administrations of Kennedy, Nixon, and now Carter all suffered from limited access and closed decisions. Coteries contributed to dangerous decisions in the Bay or Pigs, Vietnam, and Watergate, and President Carter's more resounding failures in policy initiative can be traced to the same problem.

Coteries invite what the psychologist Irving Janis calls "group think,"[2] when closed groups tend to unduly narrow options, misperceive information, and develop a siege mentality. The situation is exacerbated under crisis when, as President Johnson did over Vietnam and President Nixon over Watergate, the executive and his coterie can retreat into splendid isolation and use media exposure to create the illusion of leadership. But this dangerously distorts political perceptions and leads to a slow loss of touch with political realities. (Lyndon Johnson presents a study in contrast. In domestic politics, he used the party and his experience and skill to gain a successful legislative program. In foreign policy, due largely to inex-

[2] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groups Think: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascos* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972).

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perience and personal limits, he retreated to a small coterie and the results were disastrous.)

The inexperience and isolation of the coterie impel the coterie executive to "go to the people" to force recalcitrant legislatures and bureaucracies into line. Presidents Nixon and Carter both exhausted this ploy. Governor Brown of California practices a more sophisticated variant of the strategy. Brown rides the crest of whatever issue wave is sweeping the people. Both strategies underline the coterie's reliance upon a plebiscite executive. They try to arouse the public to pressure the legislature, but the ad hoc and impersonal media election strategy creates no enduring citizen presence. Rhetorical overkill and appeals to the people on such issues as the energy crisis are bound to fail. "The people" have no enduring political clout and the executive has no links with coalitions that would apply continuous pressure upon the legislatures. Precisely the election strategy of the coteries frustrates their later desperate attempts to overcome their inherent limits.

Frustrated as an effective domestic leader, the presidential coterie leader, at least, finds foreign-policy grandstanding an easy way to gain visibility and success. This fits the closed decision-making nature of the coterie and captures media attention.

The legislature magnifies the singular inappropriateness of coteries. Freed from political obligations, except to interest groups, and granted institutional independence by the new congressional rules on subcommittee chairmanships and staff allowances, the last three Congresses have been immune to traditional incentives that political leaders have used to garner agreement upon law and policy. Some of President Carter's awkward attempts to employ political pressure have foundered both on the limits of his coterie style and the strength of other coteries in Congress.

Coterie politics profoundly separates the means of gaining and maintaining power from the means of governing. The great accomplishment of political parties, when they worked, was to unite the process of election with the creation of a consensus and a capacity to govern. But the parties are dying and the single-minded devotion of the coterie makes it a logical successor as a means of attaining power. The coterie, however, is flawed as an agency for the exercise of power. The dangers of isolation, closed decision-making procedures, and the resort to insubstantial demagoguery, all gravely undermine the political system's capacity for leadership and simply reinforce the public spiral of dissatisfaction, mistrust, anger, and apathy.

Murray Hausknecht

Reading a Revolution

After catastrophies like floods or hurricanes we see strange sights—the cow on the barn roof, the bed floating down Main Street. Revolutions, too, cast up strange sights that upset our expectations about the rightful order of things: religious leaders, messianic figures to their followers, who spread their calls for a return to tradition by tape cassettes and latter-day flagellants who march to the rhythm of a leader chanting into a bullhorn. Unlike the random consequences of natural forces, however, such scenes may conceal latent meanings; the incongruities and seeming absurdities may represent a coherent order.

Ayatollah/Açtor Demonstrators in the streets of Teheran routinely carry pictures of Ayatollah Khomeini. Shortly after the occupation of the American Embassy some patriotic demonstrators in Texas and California carried pictures of John Wayne. If we take these portraits to be iconic symbols, embodiments of underlying ideas and values, then the icons above the heads of a crowd are clues to the ideological terrain beneath them.

Khomeini is a sacred figure; his image represents the values of Islam, and carrying his picture testifies to the primacy of Islam in one's life. If Khomeini is Islam, Wayne is the more secular American Spirit: the strength, aggressiveness, capacity for direct action, and the fearlessness that overcame the terrors of the wilderness and the frontier. The picture of Wayne celebrates and honors the legendary world of the pioneer and frontiersman.

But there is a difference between the two icons. Wayne represents the American Spirit at a remove; he is an icon constructed out of his movie roles. Khomeini, on the other hand, has a direct, vital connection to Islamic values. His life has been lived in accordance with the precepts of Islam—it is an exemplary life. To carry a picture of Wayne suggests a self-consciousness, a sense of detachment or distance from the traditional values that is not apparent among the crowds in Iran.

Although the values of the pioneer and the frontiersman are continually invoked in the ceremonials of American political life there is, at one level of consciousness or other, a pervasive sense of their inappropriateness to the society America has become and the world in which it

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exists. Marching beneath Khomeini's picture expresses a commitment and desire to live by the embodied values; carrying Wayne's picture is an affirmation of the traditional values but an affirmation shadowed by the disenchanted knowledge that something more is required in the modern world.

Israelis/Americans. When it became clear that the Iranian authorities supported the militant students, a small-town Maryland resident was quoted as saying, ". . .I think the time has come to move in and use force. I am afraid we are not going to do anything about it. We ought to turn the job over to the Israelis. They would know what to do."

This is both a lamentation for by-gone times and an acknowledgment that actions possible then are impossible now. The possibility of using force, a spontaneous and "natural" reaction to the frustrations of international politics, is projected onto Israelis—"They would know what to do." As always, it is the minority, whether blacks or Jews, who symbolizes the "natural world" in which aggression is an appropriate response to the hostile actions of others. (Israelis lend themselves to this stereotype as a result of the Entebbe raid and their image as desert pioneers: the Israeli becomes the last John Wayne character.) To be an American is to experience the stress of living with the constraints of the modern world while longing for a glorious past when "natural impulses" could be freely expressed.

Turbans/Ties. Journalists in Teheran talked among themselves of the "turbans" and the "ties" when distinguishing between the clerics of the Revolutionary Council and the nominal government officials.

The turban is a traditional headgear of the Middle East and an essential part of the religious dress. The tie represents the alien, bourgeois attire of Western civilization. The principal "ties" of the Iranian revolution have been two prime ministers, neither closely identified with Khomeini, successive foreign ministers, and the president. The latter and the foreign ministers were all educated outside Iran, and one of the former ministers is also a naturalized American who once lived in Houston.

A tie in Teheran is emblematic of men bestriding two worlds. As a result of their experience abroad they are aware of and perhaps share at least some Western orientations, and this, in part, qualifies them for positions in which they deal with the world beyond Iran. But they also have to represent the triumphant values of the Islamic revolution, and to do this successfully they must be committed to some degree to the traditional values and perspectives of their native society. "Ties" are men destined to lives of strain.

"Turbans" experience no stress; the attire of the mullah signals no discontinuity, either to himself or to others, between his status and that of his predecessors. The man who wraps the turban about his head in the morning knows little of the experience of discordant values and perspectives. But the man who knots his tie each morning binds himself to a burden of clashing orientations.

Qum/Teheran. "Ties" are also distinguished from "turbans" by their place of residence. The milieu of "ties" is Teheran while Khomeini and his circle of leaders live in the "holy city" of Qum except when illness forces them into the profane precincts of a Teheran hospital. When government officials need to consult with the Imam they travel to Qum.

In cities of the contemporary world tradition runs headlong into modernity. This is especially true of capital cities, where the stranger is officially welcomed, relationships with him are established, and the material goods of modern societies are most easily acquired. In these encounters traditional ideologies and institutions are threatened by the attractions of modernity.

But not all cities are cultural crossroads; the "holy city" of Mecca, for example, is forbidden to non-Moslems. (Elsewhere in Saudi Arabia all non-Moslem sojourners are forced to live within walled compounds.) Cities like Qum, then, tend to be only minimally affected by alien influences. A leader who makes a revolution in the name of Islamic fundamentalism and resides in a "holy city" remains insulated from the daily confrontations of modernity. When government officials travel from Teheran to Qum, the moral superiority of tradition is affirmed; for the secular officials, whose ties proclaim them tainted by alien ways, the trips to Qum are the institutionalization of the journey to Canossa.

Drum/Bullhorn. Even in Qum there are limits to insulation. Early in January it was reported that in Qum —

> . . . thousands of the faithful paraded past Ayatollah Khomeini's house in a fervent display of loyalty. Flagellants wearing black jackets and caps ritualistically hit their backs with small metal chains to the beat of a drum. . . while a man with a white bullhorn led them in the chant: "The only party is the party of God! The only leader is Khomeini!"

In the ceremonies of traditional communities the

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voice of a leader-priest, the beat of a musical instrument, the sounds of the group's chanting establish a rhythm that envelops all in a single fellowship. The unmediated sounds are an auditory dimension of the "face-to-face" relationships in the community. In a sense, the distance at which the unmediated voice of the leader can be heard establishes the line that defines the boundaries of the community; to be at the fringes of the audience where one can barely hear the leader is not to be a full participant in the ceremony. Those beyond the range of the unmediated voice have greater difficulty in submerging themselves in the rhythm of the ritual.

The bullhorn's amplification of the voice of the leader increases his range of control. Bullhorn and microphone allow greater numbers of individuals to be caught up in the ceremony, but this extension of range involves a change in the nature and quality of the ceremony. The voice is now mechanically mediated, disembodied. The relationship between leader and followers changes; there is a loss of personal contact. With the increasing number of participants, the relationship among them also changes in the direction of greater psychic distance. The bullhorn and microphone initiate the possibility of transforming the traditional ceremonials into mass rallies; a religious chant—"There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet"—is adapted to political ends—"The only party is the party of God! The only leader is Khomeini!" The sound of the bullhorn is the tribute modern technology exacts from the pieties of tradition.

Iranian Students/Harvard Professors. Not long after the hostages were taken, a Harvard law professor, a teacher of "courses in negotiations and international conflict," pointed out in an article in the *New York Times*, "that true power comes not from B-52s but from understanding the legitimate interests of others and then insisting upon adherence to principles that serve their interests as well as ours." The day before, also in the *Times*, appeared a report from Teheran that quoted one of the student militants: "'It is our religious duty to force America to give back the Shah. . . and in questions of religious duty there is no place for negotiations.'"

Although a Harvard professor is hardly a conventional symbol of America, in this instance he is an appropriate one. In modern societies "being reasonable" means, among other things, the expectation of conflicting interests and a recognition that to resolve conflict will rarely mean total victory or total defeat. But where modernity has a tenuous foothold, "being reasonable" may have different meanings—"reason" may demand, for example, the subordination of all other ends to one overriding moral goal. When the "reason" of a modern society confronts the "reason" of a traditional one, two world views are attempting to communicate across a chasm.

On the other hand, sometimes such an abyss opens beneath people of the same society. It was not too long ago that Harvard professors and their colleagues elsewhere were confronted by students presenting them with "nonnegotiable demands," a phrase that finds its echoes in today's Teheran. Those demands in face of pleas for "reason" were intertwined with notions about the importance of "doing one's own thing," "letting it all hang out," and, generally, celebrations of the spontaneous and the "natural." From that perspective to heed a call for "reason" was to acquiesce in the betrayal of a moral undertaking.

A FAIRLY COHERENT PICTURE emerges from this reading of the Iranian crisis: two contrasting societies each incorporating features of the other so that there is both divergence and overlap.

One set of constructions depicts Iran as a society attempting to reorder itself in terms of religious tradition—not simply a "republic" but an Islamic republic. The insistence on the primacy of traditional religious values is an attempt to maintain a continuity between present and past. The other side of the coin is an effort to insulate the society from the effects of modernity by asserting the dominance of tradition. This entails a defense against a prime characteristic of modern consciousness: the sense of detachment, a distancing of oneself from traditional values that culminates in a fundamental ambivalence toward the past. Modernity means not only the experience of uncertainty but a tendency to embrace and assign positive value to it; in short, modernity brings a problematic orientation to the world and one's relation to it. A modern temperament confronts the world with a question while the traditionalist remains secure in certainties.

The problematic orientation is both cause and result of difficulties in seeing continuities between past and present. Modern societies change rapidly, and the wisdom of the fathers is not always appropriate to the needs of the children. But if traditional lore and knowledge are suspect, this very suspicion underscores the discontinuities. For the modern person, past and present are separate worlds and one has little of value for the other. In traditional societies, yesterday will be today and what was learned then can be used now. Obviously,

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this is too stark a statement: detachment, ambivalence, and problematic orientation are not all-pervasive in the modern world. Still, these are major threads of cultural patterns that exert a strong influence over large segments of modern societies.

One consequence of this modern perspective is a sense of "constraint" in responding to the world. The small-town American who is "afraid we are not going to do anything about" the hostages is expressing a recognition that "spontaneous" or "natural" reactions are no longer appropriate. The traditional "patriotic" response is only possible when there is certainty that one's own society is incapable of doing evil. The other side of this coin is, at minimum, the beginning of a recognition of the legitimacy of the others' interests. These perceptions become the ground for the definition of "negotiations" as a "reasonable" response to problems.

But if the Iranian revolution is a revolt against modernity, it is equally true that Iran cannot escape modernity. It is built into the revolution itself, and it produces discordancies and strains that will influence the subsequent course of the revolution. Some sources of these discordant elements are not hard to find. The economy of an oil-producing nation caught up in a complex international market—"a world system"—requires some reliance on Western-educated technicians whose perspective cannot be fully congruent with those of clerical revolutionaries. This tension is appropriately symbolized by the first president of the Islamic Republic of Iran: a Sorbonne-educated economist whose father was an ayatollah. (There is an echo here of European Jewish history: the tendency, after emancipation, for the sons of rabbinic families to turn to secular professions.)

The militant students, like their Western counterparts, experience a weakening of ties to their families and communities of origin without at the same time assuming the responsibilities and constraints of adult occupational and familial roles. They float, so to speak, relatively unattached to existing social structures but still vulnerable to the strains of the clash between tradition and modernity. Embracing "religious duty" dissolves the looming ambiguities; and, without firm social anchors, there are no countervailing forces to the seemingly clear-cut directives of "religious duty." The Iranian students may not be very much different from the American students of the '60s who labeled as "hypocrisy" actions that recognized the complexity and problematic nature of the world.

As this is written in the spring of 1980, the Americans are still hostages and the tensions among the leading Iranian actors in this scene of the Iranian drama remain unresolved. By the time this is read the hostages may have been freed and these particular tensions resolved. But the latter can only be a temporary resolution, for the incongruities of the Iranian revolution suggest that it is a revolution made by individuals and groups who are in conflict not only with one another but also with themselves. □

Jerry Watts

The Draft and the Poor

We have received the following comment from a reader, a graduate student in political science at Yale University. We will be glad to print other opinions, briefly stated, on this subject—EDS.

Where did the belief originate that the existence of a draft makes us more willing to engage in warfare? The draft did not cause us to enter the Vietnam conflict. And though it facilitated our continued involvement in that unjust war, the presence of white, middle-class Americans in the army undoubtedly catalyzed the antiwar movement at home. Huge segments of American society were politicized as never before. Then, as now, it was unrealistic to try to circumvent a war by denying the government the means of waging war, in this case depriving it of the necessary manpower.

Now there is a prevailing attitude among liberal and left-wing intellectuals that anything that aids in the demilitarization of society should be encouraged. Thus they consider President Carter's recent, successful attempt to initiate a predraft registration involving youth from all sectors of American life as a dangerous attempt to fuel our country's militarism. And so, naturally, they resist it.

It is also feared that a return to the draft will mark a return to an interventionist foreign policy—as if the volunteer army had inhibited our actions abroad. Such thinking is fallacious. Carter's

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nonintervention in Angola, Nicaragua, and Cuba rested upon ideals stronger than simple fear of our own military ineptitude. If Vietnam indeed is to be our model, then we see that the infusion of middle-class youth into the military is an efficacious check on an expansionist foreign policy.

Most all Americans, irrespective of their political philosophies, benefit from the existence of a strong United States military. We support an army capable of strong defense in a world not yet known for its benevolence; the United States is not the only nation capable of aggressive action. Most socialists would, I think, admit that part of our long-range vision for change in America relies on the willingness of some to defend it, even unchanged.

At the same time, there is some validity to the claim that the present army is militarily unsound. Almost six out of every ten persons in the volunteer army are categorized by the army as 3B, marginal in their mental capacity. During the Vietnam War, only one soldier out of ten fell into this category. Whereas the Vietnam-era army read on the 11th-grade level, today's typical volunteer reads on a 5th-grade level. While over 83 percent of American youth now graduate from high school, only 42 percent of the volunteer army has a high-school diploma.

TO WHOM are the people of the liberal/left speaking when they argue that registration and the draft would militarize American society? What they really mean is that a return to the draft would militarize middle-class American society. *The lower classes are already militarized.* The volunteer army is a symbol of the coercive nature of the capitalist marketplace, being the repository of thousands of young men who are dissatisfied with employment opportunities and the future. Invariably, they are poor and nonwhite.

Although it may be said that the present volunteer army provides jobs for a segment of society that would probably otherwise be unemployed, do we really want to legitimate military service as a cure for unemployment? A military filled with black youth fleeing an unemployment rate of 40 percent in the ghettos would only create an army of mercenaries. To oppose the draft is to support a status quo that fills the military with youth who only marginally share in the benefits of our society and who possess the least power to affect the direction of our foreign policy.

Besides being the beneficiary of American social injustice, the volunteer army is a flagrantly unequal way of distributing the burden of national security. Those who argue that the new antidraft movement is but the initial step in a movement to eliminate military service altogether for the rich and poor alike are kidding themselves in order to hide their often selfish motivations. Today's protests are really directed against the new threat of non-poor America. They do nothing to remedy widespread inequities.

Why have these demonstrators waited until now to speak out against a military that has always been with us? Students oppose the draft registration proposal primarily because they cannot imagine themselves doing something as mundane as driving a jeep. Certainly, they cannot imagine themselves killing anyone. Yet, it has not bothered them greatly that other Americans are driving tanks and jeeps and are being trained to kill.

Then there are those who recognize the importance of a strong military but feel that the personal costs for them to enter the service are too high. "Let someone else serve," they say, alluding to that class of Americans whose "careers" won't be interrupted.

WHAT OF THE BRINKMANSHIP nature of calling for draft registration at a time of international tensions? By now it is obvious that Carter was more eager to change his "weakling" image on the domestic front than to engage in international combat. Interestingly, the same liberal/left intellectuals who had often insisted on reading Carter's domestic pronouncements as more symbolic than substantive were now willing to take him at his word on this highly politicized issue.

Liberals are incapable of empathizing with poor people in order to see how this issue looks to them; that is a missing part of their political education, and that's what makes them liberals. I have less understanding for those social democrats who have suspended their socialism, their commitment to equality for blacks and poor whites, in order to pursue a bourgeois antimilitarism.

There is no reason to think that the government is advocating draft registration in the name of equality. But for whatever reasons they choose to reinstate the draft, it will have the unintended consequence of laying the groundwork for the establishment of a political coalition that could transcend class barriers. An armed force composed of draftees would provide the basis for a multiclass, multiethnic civilian constituency intent upon keeping an eye on expansionist foreign-policy initiatives. It would be a coalition of people intent on keeping their sons, daughters, husbands, wives, and friends alive.

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Unless the antidraft registration movement incorporates a platform to better the lives of lower-class Americans, it will remain a self-interested bourgeois movement. If so, whenever we hear, "register to vote—don't vote to register," let us realize that what they're saying is, "if, as a nation, we can afford to risk losing lives, why not risk the lives of those who produce nothing?" □

Henry Pachter

After Afghanistan —Round Three

Here is another piece continuing the informal discussion among Dissent *editors on foreign-policy issues after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Different views appeared in the previous two issues; there may be others in the next one.* — EDS.

The election of Reagan and Bush would have many regrettable consequences, but none more dangerous than the prospect that the necessary debate on foreign policy will be conducted in terms of old "cold-war" alignments instead of a search for new alternatives. Bush's previous identification with the CIA and Reagan's predilection for strong gestures and large defense budgets will obfuscate the issues, mislead the public as well as foreign observers, and induce the opposition to persist in obsolete attitudes that simply negate the official rhetoric while reflecting the concepts on which that rhetoric is based.

Except for slight shifts of emphasis, I do not expect notable changes in U.S. foreign policy. If Reagan chooses a secretary of state with any professional experience, he will astonish the world by his moderation and realism. For, after all, the arm of U.S. power is much shorter than most Americans like to think, and the policy choices are fewer than electoral rhetoric would have us believe. Even Archie Bunker may not think that by voting for Reagan he can advance by a single day the release of the hostages in Teheran or the withdrawal of the Russians from Kabul. "Deep in his heart" he knows that the recent reverses of U.S. foreign policy were not caused by Jimmy Carter's faint-heartedness or Zbig's lack of subtlety, but by a fundamental change in the rules of the diplomatic game that has made all "cold-war" attitudes, whether pro or con, equally irrelevant. The U.S. lost its position of leadership not because poor Jimmy Carter failed to impress the imperious Helmut Schmidt, but now 35 years after the last war Europe finally feels strong enough to do without U.S. tutelage and to conduct a foreign policy of its own. Nor has our ascendency over the Third World weakened because we did or did not build certain weapons; the truth is that for a decade now developing countries have been slipping away from U.S. political domination because, unable and unwilling to maintain our former role of world policeman, we no longer offer client governments much they cannot get elsewhere without loss of dignity.

The problem is not whether the U.S. is strong or weak, nor is it whether the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. is the stronger. The problem is: whatever power the U.S. can deploy is becoming less and less adequate to deal with the *specific* areas of trouble. The difference is not between near and far situations (we could not prevent Grenada from going the Castro way any more than Cambodia), nor is it between areas where we have "interests" and others (we are as powerless in Teheran as in Kabul). Nor is the difference between measures that are reasonable, commensurate with the problems and acceptable to our allies, and measures that are ill conceived, unacceptable, and indicative of cold-war attitudes. Even on the innocuous measures acceptable to as dedicated a cold-war critic as Michael Harrington (*Dissent*, Spring 1980), our allies no longer follow the U.S. lead: the Olympic boycott was a flop, and instead of supporting our limitation on high-technology exports, our friends not only offer their wares to the Soviet union, they even open new credit lines to finance that export.

Why does the enormous power of the U.S.—economic, military, and political—have so little effect? We have witnessed, in the last decade or so, a most ominous phenomenon of de-coupling. Our economic power no longer translates into political power; our military power no longer translates into economic power; our political power, where it still exists, no longer translates into military power. The Shah of Iran, supposedly then our political creature, was the leader of the price-raising OPEC insurgency, and our hold on the Iranian military was unable to save his regime. Lyndon Johnson still was able to save Balaguer in Santo Domingo and get away with it; Reagan may cut off funds to

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Nicaragua, but he is likely to look on when the next Caribbean domino falls.

We could not prevent Schmidt's and Giscard's independent overtures to the Soviet Union; the irony there is that they can do so precisely because they feel safe under the umbrella of American nuclear power. It is no longer assumed that defense arrangements are all-inclusive and sufficient to safeguard a country's interests, or that they commit the members of the alliance to political, economic and ideological, as well as military, solidarity. The cold war is no longer a reality.

HERE A WORD of clarification. The way people use the term "cold war" is apt to confuse the debate. If any strong measure, or a strong word that may have been uttered in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, is dubbed "cold war," we have no conception of world politics. Historians such as Louis Halle define the Cold War as a period (roughly 1948-65) in international relations, characterized by a bipolar structure, with the Soviet Union and the United States exercising hegemonial powers, each within its own sphere. Though antagonistic, the powers refrained from the use of military force, and the relationship between the blocs was governed by "coexistence"—that is, mutual respect for the status quo, first tacitly, then explicitly: the Helsinki Agreements recognized the Soviet conquests in World War II as permanent, put the quietus on national liberation movements in Europe, but liberated Soviet energies to foment national liberation movements elsewhere.

The structure of peace during that period was maintained by the fear of war. American superiority in strategic missiles not only "contained" direct Soviet moves to change the map but also discouraged anti-Western movements in other parts of the world, where Soviet support might have tipped the scale. Under the threat of "instant massive retaliation" to any violation of borders, the Cold War guaranteed a cold peace. On its own terms, however, this game was reckless; it was self-liquidating because our margin of superiority had to become less and less formidable as the armament race escalated. In the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, Kennedy already had to be content with a half-victory. Thereafter, the nuclear deterrent lost its credibility, or was just credible enough for a number of countries to strike out on their own under the umbrella of the big-power stalemate. Instead of a structure of peace we shall soon have a free-for-all condition bordering on international chaos. To maintain its influence in various parts of the planet, it is no longer sufficient for the U.S. to intimidate or restrain Soviet power. It must be able to bring pressure to bear in many areas independently, as well as on the Soviet Union. The basic assumptions of the cold-war game—bipolarity and deterrence, hegemony and automatic alignments—are no longer valid.

This is why it is dangerous and misleading to apply the categories of a bygone period to the present state of affairs. Reagan is talking as though an increase in defense expenditures could improve our ability to influence events in Teheran, Kabul, or Riyadh. This is an illusion. But it is equally irrelevant to assert in rebuttal that the Russians have no intention of attacking Western Europe (Bogdan Denitch in *Dissent*, Summer 1980). No one has recently suggested that they might; on the contrary, if they are intelligent and keep their military pretenders out of foreign affairs,[1] they should be able to loosen up NATO and perhaps to Finlandize all of Europe,[2] working "detente" for all it's worth. Their aim remains the same; their method changes, and so does ours.

It is equally irrelevant to counter the prodefense lobby by counting missiles, submarines, airplanes, and what not, to assert that the U.S. is still ahead. Even a casual reader of the relevant literature must know that since the first disarmament conference in 1900 powers have debated on how to compare weapons systems of different quality and purpose. The question is not how much we have, nor whether we have more than the Russians, but whether our power can be brought to bear at *specific* points where we feel that our interests are

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[1] Since Bogdan Denitch has written that the stationing of U.S. medium-range missiles in Europe was a U.S. "signal" that created "unease" among European socialists, it should be stated that Social Democratic Chancellor Schmidt requested the decision to station such missiles in answer to the upgrading of the Soviet missile deployment in Eastern Europe. Schmidt did so in order to negotiate an agreement that both sides drop these plans. But when Gromyko came to Bonn in November 1979, to all appearances in order to open these negotiations, he was recalled abruptly—apparently in connection with the Afghan affair. This has not been commented upon in the American press, but it is clear that intrigues for the succession of Brezhnev in the Kremlin were responsible for the fatal decisions that put Soviet policies at cross-purposes with themselves.

[2] Finland did not even dare to vote on the Afghan affair in the U.N. Assembly. We also observe an increasing reluctance, on the part of Western governments, to antagonize the Soviet Union, and an anxiety, on the part of left-wing critics, to avoid anything that might give the hawks in Moscow a boost. By contrast, on the occasion of his visit in Moscow, Chancellor Schmidt once again proved that firmness pays: faced with his determined refusal to abandon his missile plan, the Russians agreed to negotiate about it without preconditions.

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at stake. A further question is what these interests are. There are very few spots in the world over which the American people would allow its government to go to war today. Only during the cold-war period did a direct comparison of missile strengths make any sense. Today we live in a different world.

A related instance of cold-war thinking—always drawing up balances between the two superpowers—occurs in H. Brand's contribution to this discussion (*Dissent*, Spring 1980). "American hegemony is generally in no way preferable to the Russian kind," he writes, as though foreign policy were a beauty contest.[3] Is there no difference between the violent subjection of one country by another and *the hegemony* of a big country trading with its smaller neighbors?

THE QUESTION IS NOT whether the Soviet Union should be allowed to appropriate this or that piece of geography, but whether it is possible, in the long run, to live in a world-political environment where (a) a country may invade another country in order to impose its choice of government there; (b) a country may send soldiers across the ocean to tip the scales in an ongoing civil war and to install in another country a new dictatorship; (c) a country may equip and train terrorists or guerrilla forces in order to change the balance of power in another part of the world.

In 1937, Soviet Foreign Minister Litvinov submitted to the League of Nations a definition of "aggression" that would authorize collective action against the aggressor. This definition contained, among other things, all the above. Of course, at that time, the Soviet Union belonged to the nations that stood for preservation of the status quo; it was on the defensive. Today, by surprising agreement between Denitch and Kissinger, the United States is "a stand-pat power, generally opposed to change." From this Bogdan Denitch concludes: "We as socialists do not and cannot support that Western interest."

This is another remnant of cold-war thinking or, more precisely, another instance where opponents of the cold war have adopted the presuppositions of its proponents. There is an assumption that the contest in world politics is really a sort of international class war, in which the allies and clients of the Soviet Union stand for "progressive" causes, whereas the friends and protégés of the U.S. represent nothing but reaction. It is further assumed that the domestic policies in various countries reflect their respective positions in the cold war. The truth is that the U.S. government has supported democratic, social democratic, conservative, reactionary, semifascist and even communist governments, without discrimination, provided they were anti-Russian.

Today foreign policy is completely divorced from ideology: Nixon went to Peking, and what the Vietnamese are doing in Cambodia or Cubans in the Ogaden is fascist oppression. The "change" that has come about in Iran is nothing to be welcomed, nor would the "change" that the P.L.O. contemplates in Palestine be a change for the better. I can name quite a number of countries in Asia and Africa whose status quo—even under "American hegemony"—is infinitely preferable to the kind of "change" that some misguided socialists, hopelessly mired in the anti-cold-war verbiage of their past, think desirable. They take no notice of the real changes in the world but continue to play old records—"Western Interests," "hegemony," "American Imperialism"—whenever an attempt is made, ever so feebly, to stop the dangerous course of expansionism.

The socialist interest, of course, is to strengthen the chances of coexistence and detente; to separate the necessary and spontaneous changes in the social, economic, and political structures of developing countries as much as possible from the world-political contest; to defuse nationalism, the deadly enemy of socialism—but certainly not to exacerbate ethnic, religious, economic, and social conflicts (most of which may not have *any* immediate resolution) by superimposing foreign power conflicts upon them; and to defend the status quo against any attempt to change it by the use of force. This last requirement may involve consequences that are difficult to swallow. A guarantee of the status quo automatically applies to the unpalatable governments in Teheran, Pankow, Pretoria, Pnomh Penh, Riyadh, Tel Aviv, Seoul, and others. It also means support of any government that will agree to help defend the status quo. Only if this is clearly understood can we avoid having periodical crises in Berlin, Korea, Cuba, Jerusalem, and a few other places.

Under the cold-war assumptions, this mandate of collective security rested on Acheson's Categorical Imperative of foreign policy: act in such a way that the maxim of your actions can serve as a model for all peace-loving states. On this

[3] Incidentally, since that embarrassing sentence was written, thousands of Cubans "voted with their feet" to disagree; they followed a hundred thousand Soviet Jews and a million East Germans.

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principle, the U.S. was expected to act as though it had received a mandate to police the peace, and it expected other countries to follow its lead. This did not work, not even in Korea, and it has become totally unrealistic in the meantime. But as of today we have developed nothing to replace collective security. Though some nations have ideologies—even rather aggressive ones—they are all nationalistic and there is no international code that guides the behavior of nations. Perhaps it is a blessing in disguise that the American people have recently forgotten their crusading spirit; for anti-Fascism has been turned into anti-Communism and its obverse, anti-Americanism. I agree with Dennis Wrong and Michael Harrington that it would be a step toward realism if ideology could be taken out of foreign policy altogether. But that throws us back upon the seas of self-interest—a most uncertain element.

MY CONCLUSION is that the structure of peace must be sought in some new arrangement with the Soviet Union. After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, we lost two valuable years during which we refused to negotiate about an arms pact with the power that had violated the code of international order. But we must coexist, and negotiations about SALT II and III must go on despite or rather because of Afghanistan. One has no need to "coexist" with neighbors who behave decently of their own accord. But, of course, one persuades a bandit only if one can show him that crime does not pay. The Soviet Union will not agree to any code of behavior as long as it has not been persuaded that it could not gain more by following its expansionist instincts uninhibited by international compacts. Though the expansionist phase of Soviet imperialism is not exhausted, experience has shown that it can be contained by determination. But only a fool would whet its appetite by yielding to pressure.

On the other hand, the Soviet leadership is facing enough difficulties at home and in its own empire to justify the hope that they, too, will see their advantage in the establishment of an international order. Such a new arrangement obviously must be based on a status quo that takes account of some recent power shifts: the emergence of Europe, Japan, China, and the oil-rich Middle East as independently active factors; the economic power of the raw-material producing nations, and the nuclear potential of such countries as India. This means that both superpowers recognize the limitations of their hegemony, though it still leaves to them, together, the responsibility for a stable peace.

A Reagan administration will be tempted to realize the confrontationist part of this program and to deemphasize the coexistence part of it, at least in its propaganda. But words occasionally translate into gestures and deeds, and we may end up with the kind of fractured foreign policy that so exasperated our allies under the Carter administration: one day confrontationism, the next day retreat. Still, let us be fair to Carter: if his policy appeared to be "inconsistent," the reason was that Congress and public opinion did not permit otherwise. The majority that is likely to cast their vote against Carter in November—inasmuch as foreign policy plays a role at all—is composed of people who mind his confrontationist zigs and others who mind his conciliatory zags.[4] The essential "linkage,"[5] between the tactical measures of confrontation and the strategic goals of coexistence, or between things we have the power to grant or deny and things we would like to obtain, will be lost after that common front of rightists and leftists has done its work.

THIS ARTICLE was written before President Carter issued the new directive on nuclear warfare. This new U.S. strategy for "limited nuclear war" actually wipes out any difference that might have existed between the Democratic and Republican defense postures. If it is based on the considered judgment of those who ought to know best, the directive is an admission that the threat of a "first-strike" attack is the only means we have to prevent more Afghanistans. Should that be the case this debate is as irrelevant as the missiles we are going to buy. □

[4] It was Carter who put Andrew Young in a position that enabled him to enhance U.S. stature in Africa, but the Jewish establishment caused his fall. It was Carter who wanted to give aid to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, but Congress forbade it. It was Carter who proposed an energy policy, but Congress, the oil lobby, and the U.S. public diluted and perverted it beyond recognition. One cannot well fault Carter for judging that to propose gasoline rationing would have been political suicide, apart from being a futile gesture in the face of congressional hostility.

[5] Linkage is a tool of diplomacy, not a concept of philosophy. The rage with which Stanley Hoffmann and others have assailed Kissinger for using this tool and for expounding its use in his book shows both the theoretical confusion and the dogmatism of his critics. While I am far from agreeing with Kissinger on either essentials or details, I don't think that in order to justify one's competence to speak out on matters of foreign policy, one must first denounce Kissinger. Both as a practitioner of diplomacy and as a teacher of the art he stands head and shoulders above his critics—which is not the same as saying that he is a likable man. As a historian, I am outraged by his denial to others of sources that he uses freely—certainly no way of convincing the world that he is always right; but that's not the point here.

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The Last Words of Jean-Paul Sartre

Shortly before his death last April, Jean-Paul Sartre gave an extended interview—really, a full-scale review of his intellectual career to a young friend, Benny Lévy. This interview appeared in Le Nouvel Observateur *on March 10, 17, and 24, 1980*—copyright © 1980 by Jean-Paul Sartre and *Le Nouvel Observateur*—*and is reprinted here in English translation by permission of that journal. (It cannot be reprinted without permission.)*

For several years toward the end of his life, Sartre could no longer read because of failing eyesight, and Lévy served as a mixture of apprentice, secretary, and collaborator, meeting with Sartre four times a week. They were to collaborate on a major work on ethical problems.

Sartre reviews here a host of problems, from his attitudes toward hope and despair to his earlier collaboration with the Communists in France. As the Mexican writer Octavio Paz says in his article about Sartre (p. 423), it is a "disjointed, moving text . . ." marked by a "quiet hope" that "in spite of the disasters of our era, some day men will reconquer fraternity (or will conquer it for the first time)." Over the years, of course, we have had very sharp political disagreements with Sartre, some of which Paz discusses, but perhaps I am not mistaken in thinking that this last record of his thought shows that he was moving in a direction closer to our own. In any case, it is an important document in contemporary intellectual life.—I.H.

I
Hope, Now . . .

BENNY LÉVY: For some time now you've been questioning yourself about hope and despair. But in your writing in the past, you've hardly touched on these subjects.

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: Not in the same way. I have always thought that everyone lives with a measure of hope, which is to say he believes that something he has undertaken or that matters to him or that concerns the social group to which he belongs is in the process of being achieved, and will be propitious for him as it will be for the people who make up his community. I think hope is a part of man. Human action is transcendant in the sense that it always aims at a future objective beyond the moment in which we conceive of the hope and try to realize it. There is hope, too, in the way man acts, in the very fact that he establishes a goal.

B. L.: You have said that human action aims at a goal in the future, but you have immediately added that this action is futile. Of necessity, hope is deceived. A café waiter, a public leader—Hitler or Stalin—a Parisian drunk, a Marxist revolutionary militant, and Jean-Paul Sartre—all these people, it seems, have this much in common: while they all assign themselves goals, all of them fail.

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J.-P. S.: I didn't say exactly that, you're exaggerating. I said that they never attain exactly what they seek, that there is always a failure. . . .

B. L.: You stated that a human action projects a goal into the future, but that this transcendant movement must end in failure. In *Being and Nothingness,* you described a life that projected goals in complete seriousness, but to no point whatever. Man set himself goals, yes, but basically the only goal he desired was to be God, to be what you called the cause of himself. Whence, of course, his failure.

J.-P. S.: Well, I haven't entirely broken away from this idea of failure, although it is at variance with the very idea of hope. In the days of *Being and Nothingness* I was not talking about hope. The value of hope was gradually borne in on me only later. And I have never envisaged hope as a lyrical illusion. Always, even when not talking about it, I thought of hope as one way to achieve the goal I set myself.

B. L.: Perhaps you used not to talk about hope, but you did talk about despair.

J.-P. S.: Yes, I used to talk about despair but, as I often said, it was not the opposite of hope. Despair was the belief that my fundamental goals could not be achieved, and that, as a consequence, human reality entailed essential failure. All in all, at the time of *Being and Nothingness* I saw despair merely as a lucid view of the human condition.

B. L.: You said to me once, "I've talked about despair, but that's bunk. I talked about it because it was fashionable. Everybody was reading Kierkegaard then."

J.-P. S.: That's right. On my own account I have never felt despair, nor envisaged despair as something characteristic of me. Yes, Kierkegaard greatly influenced me in this.

B. L.: Funny, since you don't really like Kierkegaard.

J.-P. S.: No, but all the same I was influenced by him. It seemed to me that what he was saying could have real meaning for other people. So I wanted to take it into account in my own philosophy. It was the notion that something was lacking in my personal self-knowledge, but that this something could not cause me to despair. Yet I had to consider that despair must exist for other people since many were talking about it. But please note that despair is hardly mentioned in my work from then on. It was the matter of a moment. I see that in many philosophers, in connection with despair or any other philosophical idea. Early in their work they talk about an idea from hearsay, they give it importance; then, little by little, they don't talk about it because they realize that *for them* the substance of it doesn't exist; they've merely picked it up from other people.

B. L.: Is that true of anguish, too?

J.-P. S.: I have never known anguish. That is a key philosophical notion of the '30s. It came principally from Heidegger. It's one of the notions people were making use of, but to me it meant nothing. Of course, I knew grief or boredom or poverty, but —

B. L.: Poverty?

J.-P. S.: Well, I experienced it through others. If you like, I saw it. But anguish and despair, no. . . . Well, let's not go back over this since it has nothing to do with what we are looking for.

B. L.: But it does. It's important to know that you did not speak about hope, and that when you talked about despair it was, basically, not your own idea.

J.-P. S.: My idea was indeed my own idea, but the heading I put it under—despair—was alien to me. More important for me was the idea of failure. The idea of failure in relation to what could be termed an absolute goal. What I did not say in *Being and Nothingness* is that everyone has a goal beyond the practical or theoretical goals of the moment. It is beyond matters of politics, say, or education. Beyond all such things, everyone has a goal that I call transcendant or absolute, and all the practical goals have meaning only in relation to this goal. The meaning of a man's action, then,

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is this goal, which is variable, of course—it varies from man to man—but it has the special characteristic of being absolute. And hope is bound to this absolute goal as, it must be added, is failure, in the sense that true failure is related only to this goal.

B. L.: And is failure here inevitable?

J.-P. S.: We now come to a contradiction I've not yet resolved, but I think I may through these conversations. On the one hand, I hold to the idea that a man's life appears to be a failure: what he has attempted he has not succeeded in doing. He doesn't even succeed in thinking what he wants to think, or in feeling what he wants to feel. This leads to absolute pessimism, which is something I did not claim in *Being and Nothingness* but am obliged to acknowledge today. And then, on the other hand, since 1945 I have come more and more to think—and now believe completely—that, as I was saying a moment ago, an essential element of an action is hope. Hope means that I cannot undertake an action without expecting that I am going to complete it. And, as I said to you, I do not think that this hope is a lyrical illusion; it is in the very nature of the action. This is to say that the action, being at the same time an act of hoping, cannot fundamentally be doomed to absolute, inevitable failure. This does not mean that the action must necessarily achieve its aim, but that it must present itself as the achieving of a goal posited in the future. And there is even a kind of necessity in hope. The idea of failure is not deeply rooted in me at this moment. On the contrary, insofar as hope is the relation of man to his goal—a relation that exists even if the goal is not attained—that is what remains most present in my thinking now.

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B. L.: Let's take an example—Jean-Paul Sartre. As a boy he decided he would be a writer, and this decision dedicated him to immortality. What does Sartre say in the evening of his work, what does he say about this decision? This choice of choices, which was yours—has it been a failure?

J.-P. S.: I've often said that on the metaphysical plane it was a failure. By that I mean I haven't produced a phenomenal body of work, on the order of a Shakespeare or a Hegel, and that therefore, in relation to what I should have liked, it is a failure. Yet this response seems to me untrue. Of course, I am not Shakespeare or Hegel; but I have written works that I've nurtured as carefully as I could, and some have been failures, surely, but others less so, while still others have been successes. And that is enough.

B. L.: But to consider the whole of it in relation to your decision?

J.-P. S.: The whole has worked out quite well. I know that I have not always said the same thing, and on this score you and I are at odds, for I believe that my contradictions are of little moment and that, contradictions notwithstanding, I have always held to a continuous line.

B. L.: That's hitting the bull's eye! So you don't think that falling short of the mark is inevitably bound to your position that the end can only be realized in the absolute.

J.-P. S.: No, I do not think so. For that matter, if one wants to nit-pick, one can take the view that I never thought for myself but for others. I saw how they were misled, how something was a total failure even when they believed they had succeeded. I would tell myself that the fact of my thinking that and of my writing it meant that *there* I was succeeding—that, in a more general way, I was carrying out my work well. Of course, I wasn't thinking clearly; otherwise, after all, I would have noticed the enormous contradiction; nevertheless, that's what I thought.

B. L.: But what is it, then, that makes the difference, with regard to the desire to be, between the café waiter, charged as he is with his own spirit of seriousness, and Sartre's desire for immortality? Or is there nothing more than a triviality in this difference?

J.-P. S.: I think that the idea of immortality I often indulged in when I was writing was a reverie. Immortality exists, I think,

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but not like that. I'll try to explain what I mean presently. I think that in the way I wanted immortality, the way I conceived of it, I was not so different from the café waiter or from Hitler, but the way in which I worked at my writing was different. It was clean, it was moral—and we'll later see what that means. So, I consider that a certain number of ideas that necessarily accompany an action—the idea of immortality, for example—are suspect, murky. My work has not been guided by the wish to be immortal.

B. L.: But can't one take this difference as a point of departure? You speak to us about your writing as if it were an open-handed pact, a pact of trust between reader and author. You have always made that a basic in a writer's work.

J.-P. S.: Working for society . . .

B. L.: Is there not—in this working for society—the expression of a desire that is at least as basic as the desire to be, which you talk about in *Being and Nothingness*?

J.-P. S.: Yes, but I think it must be defined. I think that there is a modality other than the primary modality of seriousmindedness. It is the moral modality. And the moral modality implies—at that level, at least—that we no longer want to be God, no longer want to be *causa sui*. We are looking for something else.

B. L.: After all, the idea of *causa sui* simply comes from a specific theological tradition.

J.-P. S.: Yes, if you like.

B. L.: From Christianity to Hegel.

J.-P. S.: If you like, yes, I agree. That is my tradition, I have no other. Neither the Eastern nor the Jewish tradition. My personal sense of history deprives me of them.

B. L.: And you have put distance between yourself and that tradition by disengaging yourself from the definition of the self-caused being, the man-God?

J.-P. S.: Yes, and I think that the morality we envisage is not connected with the Christian tradition. What we must envisage and the goals we must look for in morality are certainly not the goals that Christianity offers.

B. L.: Will such a pact of trust send us back, somehow, to a social aspiration that is at least as basic as the desire to exist?

J.-P. S.: I think so. But what "society" means here will have to be clearly defined. It's not the democracy or pseudo-democracy of the Fifth Republic. It is a very different kind of relationship among men. Nor is it the socioeconomic relationship Marx envisaged.

B. L.: In your exhaustive dispute with Marxism, weren't you basically looking for what is now, by common consent, called social aspirations, so that you could escape from the dialectic of bad faith in *Being and Nothingness*?

J.-P. S.: Unquestionably.

B.L.: At the end of *Being and Nothingness*, you believe you're opening up a new perspective on morality, but then what follows is not a book on morality but your own dispute with Marxism. It must be that the two things are intimately connected.

J.-P. S.: Yes, intimately.

B. L.: You believed that the impasse that *Being and Nothingness* led to could be circumvented if the meaning of history were what Hegel and Marxism said it was.

J.-P. S.: Yes, but only roughly. I also thought that one had to look elsewhere, which is what I am doing now. And let me tell you that the search for the true social aims of morality goes together with the idea of finding a guiding principle for the left of today. Which is to say, a left that has let everything go, that currently is crushed, that allows a wretched right to triumph.

B. L.: A sluttish right.

J.-P. S.: When I use the term "right," for me it means dirty fellows. Either the left is going to die, in which case man dies at the same moment, or new principles must be discovered for it to live by. I would like our discussion here to do two things—both outline a moral theory and find a true guiding principle for the left.

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B. L.: The first rough formulation is that a leftist principle must have some connection with social aspirations.

J.-P. S.: Absolutely. And with hope. You see, my books have failed. I have not said all I wanted to say, nor said it in the way I wanted. At times in my life, this has caused me great distress, and at other times I haven't seen my mistakes, thinking I had indeed done what I wanted to do. But at this moment, I think neither the one thing nor the other. I think I have done just about what I was capable of doing, and it's worth whatever it's worth. The future will gainsay many things I have affirmed; I hope that others will endure; but however that may be, there is a slow movement in History whereby man is becoming aware of his fellowman. When this happens, all that has been done in the past will fall into place, everything will assume its true value. Among other things, what I have written. This is what will give all we have done and will do a kind of immortality. In other words, one must believe in progress. And that, perhaps, is one of my remaining naïvetés.

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B. L.: Let's go back, if you don't mind, to your arguments with the revolutionaries. You shared their aims, you used to say. But at bottom, you always felt a measure of distrust: if only they won't achieve those aims! You yourself put it more or less in those words. You were just a fellow traveler. Didn't it make for a system of doublethink?

J.-P. S.: That's not quite exact. It is not doublethink, it's that I find every political party is, of necessity, stupid. Because, in a party, ideas come from above, and affect what is thought below. That's the very best way to produce a stupid idea. The thought should, of course, be forged below. One must not manage things so that ideas take off from above. This is why, since I was twenty, I have loathed the mere notion of the political party. One must recognize that a political party does not possess truth, that it doesn't dream of any such thing. A party has intentions, it follows a given path. Fellow traveler—to me the term means the fellow outside the Party who tries to think the truth, hoping that the Party will make use of it.

B. L.: One possible result of this fellow-traveling business: Romain Rolland arrives in the Soviet Union during the '30s—the period of forced collectivization, the liquidation of the peasants by the hundreds of thousands, a darkness of spirit—and he declares, "I have seen in the Soviet Union a remarkable enlarging of the rights of the human spirit."

J.-P. S.: Romain Rolland was not a remarkable thinker.

B. L.: Jean-Paul Sartre arrives in the Soviet Union in 1954, he makes a little official tour, and when he gets back home he declares in a big evening paper that there is more freedom in the U.S.S.R. than in any other country.

J.-P. S.: It's true that I thought well of it, if less so than you appear to think I did. But I forebore thinking ill of it.

B. L.: I must say, the fellow traveler has some weird intellectual habits.

J.-P. S.: I'm not saying a fellow traveler is perfect. It's not simple. In fact, I'm not trying now to defend the fellow traveler because the unfortunate thing is, his ideas are intended for the Party and the Party never accepts them.

B. L.: A party—stupid in the sense in which you've defined it—and a fellow traveler, which is to say an intellectual who, as such, would have some idea of truth: the one plus the other adds up to something that has failed miserably, as you well know.

J.-P. S.: I know, I know.

B. L.: But still you seem to be making some kind of posthumous eulogy of the fellow traveler.

J.-P. S.: I'm simply saying that the parties are done for. It's obvious that in 20 or 30 years the big parties of the left will no longer be what they are now. One or two may even have given up the ghost. Something different is going to come into exis-

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tence, in which there will no longer be any fellow traveler. There will be mass movements for definite, specific goals. In such mass movements, the notion of fellow traveler no longer makes any sense.

B. L.: So your fellow traveler is giving up the ghost. I'd like him to be issued a death certificate. But who's died? A pro-left scoundrel, a dimwit, a patsy? Or a basically good person?

J.-P. S.: I'd say, a person who's not bad. Not a patsy, necessarily, although in certain circumstances he could be. When he gave in to Party pressure, he became a dimwit or a patsy. But it could also happen that he did not give in, and then he was not so bad. It was the Party that made the whole thing unbearable. He was a fellow traveler *because* there was a Party.

B. L.: Let's talk plainly. Was that person a failure, was he one of the group of failures that undermined leftist thinking over the last 40 years?

J.-P. S.: According to me, yes.

B. L.: What do you think today of this aspect of your own activity?

J.-P. S.: I've not been all that much of a fellow traveler. In 1951–52 I was. Around 1954 I went to the U.S.S.R., and almost immediately afterward, after the developments in Hungary, I broke with the Party. That's my experience as a fellow traveler. Four years. What's more, with me it was secondary, since I was doing other things at the time.

B. L.: Doesn't one detect a trace of doublethink here?

J.-P. S.: I have always said that what I thought differed from what the Party thought. It wasn't any double game. At certain moments I would persuade myself that the Party's pseudoideas must contain some truth, and that what seemed stupidity was only on the surface. In fact, I was impressed because the Communist party called itself the party of the workers. I think that is a mistake. But an intellectual needs to find something to cling to and, like many other people, I found that.

B. L.: Let's talk about this need the intellectual has to cling. How does it happen that this need finally led you and many others to cling to the Stalinist rock?

J.-P. S.: It was not Stalinism. Stalinism died with Stalin. The term "Stalinism" is used today to signify no matter what.

B. L.: How does it happen that some intellectuals had a need to cling, a need to find a support, in that garbage?

J.-P. S.: Because it was a question of finding a future for society. Society had to stop being the shit it is everywhere today. I did not suppose I was going to change the world all by myself and on the strength of my own ideas, but I did discern social forces that were trying to move forward, and I believed that my place was among them.

B. L.: Is it not possible to see one important point more clearly? At the outset, this totally independent intellectual, who was not worrying his head about the Communist party, wrote *Being and Nothingness*, and he did not succeed in establishing hope, in providing a positive content to this transcendance that was projected toward future goals —

J.-P. S.: — did not succeed, but was not even trying —

B. L.: Our independent intellectual did not turn himself inside out to find truth in the bosom of the CP and its garbage. No, he elaborated his own ideas without holding himself accountable to anyone. But you ran into an impasse, and then through the Resistance you glimpsed a possible line of conduct; you assumed that your earlier conclusion was unjust and, in order to invest in the future, you joined the group.

J.-P. S.: Yes, I need men who are joined together, because one unit alone or even several separate units will not be able to shake the social corpus and make it collapse. One must assume there is a body of people who will struggle as one.

B. L. Fine. You quickly came to posit the group as the key element in a concept of revolution, ergo of the future—the union of

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a plurality of men who will act. And you were going to write a nearly 800-page book to establish a system of practical tactics.

J.-P. S.: A book that never got finished!

B. L.: But, in order to construct this system of practical tactics, you were obliged to refer to some configuration of the ultimate aim of history. So you borrowed it from Marxism: the working class was charged with responsibility for completing human pre-history. Now let's add it all up. One sees that you were blown off course by your having first defined the ultimate end as failure and then pushed on to a second definition of the ultimate end as the completion of history by the proletariat.

J.-P. S.: Without ever forgetting failure.

B. L.: In *Search for a Method*, one does meet with failure, it's true, because every time one expects to encounter brotherhood one bumps into terror. But the fact remains that, in principle, the thinking in *Search for a Method* tends to maintain that there is an ultimate goal.

J.-P. S.: There was to have been a second part, dealing with the ultimate goal and, as you know, I haven't written it.

B. L.: Neither of the two definitions you proposed is satisfactory, obviously. The first is not, since you abandoned it for the second, and the second is not, since, if I may say so, our period is abandoning it.

J.-P. S.: I assumed that the evolution through action would be a series of failures from which something unforeseen and positive would emerge, something that was implicit in the failure but that had been overlooked by those who had hoped to succeed. That something would be a series of partial, local successes, decipherable only with difficulty by the people who were doing the work and who, moving from failure to failure, would nonetheless be achieving a certain progress. This is how I always understood history.

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B. L.: When one is confronted with the difficulty of simultaneously conceiving and living the failure and its implications, with all the risks of losing one's way, one might better abandon the idea of a goal —

J.-P. S.: Then why live?

B. L.: I love to hear you say that! But how does the idea of a goal offer itself today?

J.-P. S.: Through man.

B. L.: Speak plainly!

J.-P. S.: I mean that it could show what a man is. First, and you know this, for me there is no a-priori essence; ergo, what truly is a human being is not yet established. We are not complete human beings. We are living beings who contend among ourselves to establish human relations and arrive at a definition of what is human. At this moment, we are in the thick of battle, and no doubt it will go on for many years. But one must define the battle: we are seeking to live together like human beings, and to be human beings. It is through the search for this definition, through this action that will be truly human—beyond humanism, of course—that we will be able to consider our striving and our goal. In other words, our goal is to arrive at a genuine constituted body in which each person will be a human being and in which collectivities will be no less human.

B. L.: Before 1939, you were telling us that humanism is so much shit. A few years later, without our having realized that you had changed, you gave a lecture during which you asked, Is existentialism a form of humanism? You answered yourself, Yes. And then a few years after that, at the time of the colonial wars, you proceeded to explain to us that humanism was a jock-strap for colonialism. Today you're telling us, One must create the human being. But this task has nothing to do with humanism.

J.-P. S.: In humanism, I've hated a certain way man has of admiring himself. That's what the Self-Taught Man in *Nausea* was supposed to make clear. I have always rejected that kind of humanism, and I reject it still. But perhaps I have been too rigid. What I think is that when, at last, man truly and totally exists, his relations with his fellowman and his way of being in himself

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will have the content of what one can call humanism. Which is to say simply, humanism will be man's way of being, his relations with his neighbor, and his way of being within himself. But we have not reached that yet. If you like, one could say that we are submen, beings who have not yet arrived at a final point that perhaps, for that matter, we never will arrive at but toward which we are moving. If one considers living beings as completed, closed, total entities, humanism is not possible in our time. If, on the other hand, one considers that these submen of today have in them principles that are human—which is to say that basically they have certain seeds that tend toward man and that are in advance of the submen—then, thinking of the relationship of man to man in terms of the principles imposed today, we could call that humanism. Essentially, morality is a matter of one person's relationship to another. This is a moral theme that will endure when man will truly exist as man. Therefore, a theme of this kind can give rise to a humanist statement.

B. L.: Marx, too, said that in the end man will be truly whole. And in line with this reasoning, submen were regarded as raw material from which the new whole and total man might be built.

J.-P. S.: Ah, well, yes, but that's absurd. It is precisely the human side that already exists in the subman, it is precisely those beginnings that tend toward man, which forbid man's being utilized as raw material or as a means in order to achieve an end. That's exactly where we stand with morality at the moment.

B. L.: In earlier days, would you not have denounced this recourse to morality as categorical or, what's worse, bourgeois? You talk to us now about forbidding this or that, you talk to us about what is human, but once upon a time all that would have made you laugh. What's changed?

J.-P. S.: A lot of things, as you know. Yes, I would have laughed, I would have talked about bourgeois morality—in a word, I'd have run off at the mouth. Rightly speaking, and in terms of the facts and of the submen who surround us—and we are submen ourselves, no matter whether we are bourgeois or proletarian—humanism can only be achieved, lived, by human beings; and we who exist in an antecedent period, who are pushing on toward being the men we should be, the men those following us will be, we experience humanism only as that which is best in us, which is to say, our striving to live beyond ourselves in the society of men. The men whom we can prefigure through our best action.

B. L.: What do you mean today by "morality"?

J.-P. S.: By "morality" I mean that every conscience, no matter whose, has a dimension of obligation. This I have not studied in my philosophical works, and for that matter, few people have studied it as such. "Obligation" is a poor word, but to find a better term you would almost have to invent one. By obligation I mean that at every moment in which I am aware of no matter what and in which I do no matter what, there exists a kind of requisition that extends beyond the immediate reality and makes the action I wish to take include a kind of inner restraint, which is a dimension of my conscience. Every conscience must do what it does, not because what it does is so valid but, quite the contrary, because no matter what objective the conscience has, it presents itself as something in the nature of a requisition. For me, this is the beginning of morality.

B. L.: For a long time you've been receptive to the idea that, basically, the individual is mandated. And in *The Idiot of the Family*[your book on Flaubert] you added, quoting Kafka, "but one doesn't know by whom." So in this idea of a freedom that is mandated, but one does not know mandated by whom, are you sketching the idea of a requisitioned freedom?

J.-P. S.: I think they're the same. One difficulty we meet in almost all the classical ethical systems—in Aristotle's as well as in Kant's—is this: Where does one place morality in the human conscience? Is it a vision? Does one live morally all the time?

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Are there moments when one is not moral without, for all that, being immoral? While eating a piece of bread or drinking a glass of wine, does one feel moral or immoral, or is it a matter of no importance? In another area, one does not know the connection between what people very often teach their children as morality for everyday life and morality in exceptional circumstances. In my opinion, each conscience has this moral dimension; no one ever analyzes it, and I should like us to.

B. L.: In your early works, you were already characterizing conscience as moral: freedom was the sole source of merit. Now you are modulating your idea.

J.-P. S.: Because in my earliest studies, I, like the great majority of moralists, was looking for morality in a conscience that had no reciprocator, no *other*. . . . Today I think everything that passes for a conscience is necessarily linked to, and often is even engendered by, the presence of another—even at a given moment by the absence of that other but, in all events, by the existence of an other. To put it differently, each conscience seems to me now simultaneously to constitute itself as a conscience and, at the same time, as the conscience of the other and as the conscience for the other. It is this reality—the self considering itself as self for the other, having a relationship with the other—that I call moral conscience.

We are constantly in the presence of others, even when we are going to bed or falling asleep; the *other* is there if only in the form of an object—if I am alone in my bedroom, then in the form of some reminder: a letter lying on the bureau, a lamp that has been made by someone, a painting that has been painted by someone else. In a word, the other is always there, and is conditioning me and my response, which is not only my own response but also a response that others have conditioned from the moment of my birth—and that is a response of a moral nature.

In *Being and Nothingness*, my theory of others left the individual too independent. I did raise some questions that showed the relationship-to-others in a new light. It was not a matter of two enclosed "wholes" that made one wonder how they ever got in contact with each other since both were closed. My question had to do with a relationship of each to each, which preceded the creation of the closed whole or even prevented the "wholes" from ever being closed. So there I was, envisaging something that needed to be further developed. Nonetheless, I did consider that each conscience in itself, and each individual in himself, was relatively independent of the other. I had not determined what I am trying today to determine: What is the dependence of each individual with respect to all other individuals?

B. L.: It used to be freedom that was required, now it's "dependence." You must admit that it's amazing to hear you —

J.-P. S.: It is dependence, but not a dependence like slavery. Because I believe that this dependence is free. It is characteristic of morality that while an action seems to be subtly enjoined upon us, it also offers itself as capable of not being done. Therefore, in doing it one is making a choice, and it is a free choice. This constraint has something surreal about it inasmuch as it is not determining; it presents itself as a constraint, yet the choice is free.

B. L.: Is the experience of age contributing to modify your ideas?

J.-P. S.: No. Everybody treats me like an old man. I laugh at them. Why? Because an old man never feels like an old man. The attitude of other people makes me understand what old age means to the person who looks at it from the outside, but I don't feel my age. So, to be old is nothing that, in and of itself, teaches me anything. What does teach me something is the attitude of other people toward me. In other words, the fact that for others I am old is to be profoundly old. Old age is my reality, which others feel; they see me, they say "this nice old fellow," and they're kind because soon I'll be dying and so they're respectful, and so on. It is other people who are my old age. Be mindful of this: in spite of the way in

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which you are sharing this dialogue—effacing your own personality and talking about me—we are working together.

B. L.: In what way has this "we" been a factor in modifying your thinking, and why have you accepted a "we"?

J.-P. S.: Originally, as you know, I needed to have a dialogue with someone who, at first, I supposed would have to be a secretary—I was obliged to converse because I was no longer able to see to write. And I proposed to you that you be that, but I realized immediately that you could never be simply a secretary. That I would have to accept you in my meditation, even—in other words, accept our meditating together. And that completely changed my mode of inquiry, for until then I had always worked alone—seated at a table, with a pen and paper. Whereas we work out ideas together. Sometimes we are not in agreement. But there is an exchange that no doubt I could not have dreamed of making except when I grew old.

B. L.: Is it a lesser evil?

J.-P. S.: At the outset, yes, it was. But now this collaboration could no longer be a lesser evil. Either it was an abomination, which is to say my ideas were being diluted by another person; or it was something new, which is to say a thought was taking shape between two people. When I write, the thoughts I offer people in writing are universal. But they are not plural. They are universal, which is to say that each person who reads them will formulate these thoughts, well or badly, for himself. Yet they are not plural, in the sense that they are not produced by a meeting of several minds; they bear my mark alone. A plural thought enjoys no preferential reception. A plural thought has only one meaning, of course, but it is one that each person produces because he takes off from different preoccupations, and because he understands its structure by means of different examples.

When there is only a single author, an idea bears his imprint: one enters into his thought and circulates along paths that *he* has traced, although the thought is universal. What our collaboration has brought to me is this: plural thoughts, which we have formed together and which constantly yield me something new although I am a priori in agreement with their content. I thought that what you could say to modify an idea coming from me, your objections or your having another way of seeing the idea, and so forth—I thought that this was the essential thing, essential because it placed me in a new position, no longer facing an imagined public behind a sheet of paper, which is how it had always been for me, but facing the actual reactions that my ideas must arouse. So, at that moment you became infinitely interesting for me. There was something else that mattered a great deal: you began to think about philosophy when you were fifteen, starting with my books, and you remember them very well. Much better than I. So in our talks that is important; from time to time, you remind me of what I said in 1945 or in 1950, in order to bring me face to face with what there can be in my present ideas that contradicts or even retracts my past ideas.

So, as it turned out, you were extremely useful. This is not coming through clearly in our conversation now because, as always when you are not completely alone with me, you stay rather in the background, so that what one sees in this exchange is an old man who has taken a very intelligent fellow to work with him but who is, even so, the essential figure. But that is not what takes place between us. And it is not what I want. There are two men here—the difference in their ages matters little—to whom the history of philosophy and the history of my own thinking is well known, and who are associated in a joint work about morality, a morality that will, furthermore, often be in contradiction with some ideas that I have had. The problem does not lie there. But in our discussion, one does not sense your true importance in what we are doing.

B. L.: It's the presence of the unknown reader that distorts it.

J.-P. S.: I know that well enough, but since the unknown reader is the person for whom we are writing. . . .

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II
Violence and Fraternity

BENNY LÉVY: You said recently that the left no longer exists. Obviously, you were saying aloud what many people are surely thinking to themselves. But this isn't enough. It should be looked into a little more closely. A part of the public still votes left, there are still leftist parties. So what does it mean to say, The left no longer exists?

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: First, that although the leftist bloc always votes left, it has lost hope. It no longer believes that voting answers a larger purpose. In the past, to vote for the Communists was looked up on as a revolutionary act. Now to vote left is clearly looked on as an act of classic republicanism. There's a party that calls itself the Communist party and people vote for it in the normal course of events, the way one would vote for any other party.

B. L.: We used to say this back in the leftist days. We used to criticize leftist parties for being election-oriented.

J.-P. S.: But leftism has disappeared, too. I mean, for one thing, the electoral orientation of the leftist parties makes even the idea of a great and total change, the idea of revolution, impossible. For a long time I've thought that the Communist party is the worst enemy of revolution. And, for another thing, the insurrectional aspect of leftism has disappeared, too. Today one can no longer act as people did in '68, going on strike or staging a street demonstration; none of that means anything now. You could do such a thing; you could conceive of a demonstration that would march to the Bastille, that would be set upon by the police, and that would perhaps rough up a few cops. And then what? The situation would remain exactly the same. Whereas in the past, these actions offered the left some satisfaction, and what we have to discuss is whether this was an illusion. Anyway, that's all finished. We know that street demonstrations have less and less impact. . . . Political parties, like the socialist left, do nothing anymore except make gestures that are stymied by power struggles among political leaders and by various concepts of socialism. Mitterand and Rocard, for example.

All this indicates that the unity of the left, which was already seriously threatened as early as 1920 by the existence of the Communist party, now is wrecked. Before 1941, the left was more of a great mass movement, with a few men who could provide leadership at a given moment but who were not yet party bosses. Jaurès, for example, was more a leader than a boss. He led strikes, movements, and parliamentary action in the Chamber. . . . The left was at once diverse and united—it had a principle.

B. L.: What principle? I don't follow you at all. What did this unity of the left consist of in 1914? Doesn't this backtracking smack a little of mythology?

J.-P. S.: There was no unified policy, but one does feel that throughout the 19th and in the early 20th centuries men of the left, in general, put their faith in political and human principles and through them they conceived their ideas and actions. The left can be nothing else. Ever since the formation of a left, around 1792, I'd say, and up through the 19th century these principles have always existed, people have believed in them, have been guided by them, but what's interesting is that they remain obscure; men's minds are mute, they don't find words to express what they believe. A person says simply, I'm for the left. And that's it. If one really wanted to do something to revive this unfortunate left, which is dead, one would have to try to articulate

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these principles, learn their nature, discover how they could come to life again. I say, the left is dead because the principles it habitually made use of were never recorded on paper or registered in people's minds.

B. L.: There's been no lack of spelling out! The definitions Marxism gave —

J.-P. S.: Marxism had the leftist principles of Marxism. Marx set those principles forth in *Das Kapital*, and presented them in his writings in general. But those were Marxist principles, they were not purely leftist principles.

Marxism appeared as a theory, a rigorous theory—or so it tried to be—that strove to study facts through deduction and analysis. But beyond that, it existed in an intellectual and emotional atmosphere that was broader than the theory itself and that, in certain respects, was deceived by the theory. This was the milieu of the left. When Marx used to go to discuss his doctrines with the German revolutionaries, he would talk with them, and they would take decisions together. Without anyone's actually saying so, what presided over their agreement was the left—it was the idea of their coming together to attempt some leftist action.

B. L.: Be that as it may, one must really decide to give this principle a name, to describe this togetherness. Now, you offer elements that should suffice: date of birth, 1792; flowering of this togetherness, in all its confusion, in the 19th century. The answer is on the tip of one's tongue, I think. At issue is the brotherhood of the insurgents of '93. It's Michelet and his account of July 14, 1789, it's the universal fraternity of Vallès and the Communards.

J.-P. S.: I don't say no. But fraternity is not so simple to define.

B. L.: It's functioned as a principle, as a point of reference. And yet no definition of it has had much substance.

J.-P. S.: That is true, but that is because it has not been sufficiently developed. I think there is something in the very idea of fraternity that prevents one's developing the principle. If you like, revolutionaries from '92 on until the Commune were brothers yet at the same time they were not brothers; to some extent, they were ashamed to be brothers. Nonetheless, their appeal was to brotherhood. And that's what one must try to clear up.

B. L.: Right. Taking off from the present collapse. What is it that is collapsing? Let's try, all the same, to specify where things are today as against that concept incarnated in 1792. The death of leftism is the key to that.

J.-P. S.: I see another cause for the collapse—the transformation of elements that, in a way, had existed on the left before 1914 into political parties. The party is the death of the left.

B. L.: Your indictment of the idea of the political party is very ambiguous. One can perfectly well say no to political parties and effect a pure and simple retreat like the one you outline. But don't stop at 1914. Go back to the beginning—to 1792.

J.-P. S.: Well, true enough, in 1792 there were no parties.

B. L.: But the worm was in the fruit. You're describing, in fact, the very movement that led leftism to its death. That's what leftism has wanted, it has wanted to go back to before the Communist or Stalinist idea of a political party. And it has tried to do so by relying simultaneously on that sentimental togetherness of the 19th century and on the very minor currents of leftist opposition running through the 20th. And, of course, leftism wanted to identify itself with the sansculottes and 1793 radicalism. Remember *La Cause du Peuple* and its complicity with *Père Duchesne*.* That's what collapsed. The attempt to go back to the time before the concept of the political party, to return to the earlier 1793 scene—and that's what is dead.

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* Lévy is apparently referring here to the Maoist newspaper *La Cause du Peuple*, published in the '60s in Paris, which—like the paper of the same name issued by Marat during the French Revolution—tried to imitate or compete with *Le Père Duchesne*, an ultraleft paper issued during the French Revolution by Herbert and notable for its extreme violence and cynicism of tone. — Eds.

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J.-P. S.: Yes, but parties that used to claim they were leftist suddenly no longer do. Because what is dead there is the leftist rearguard.

B. L.: Of course. Let's see what is crumbling about the image of 1793. We'd thought that, in opposition to the leftist parties, one should resort to radicalism. Like the sansculottes, who had pushed the revolution's initial proposition to an extreme—the proposition of popular sovereignty. All the sansculottes from the outskirts of town had to do was to pour into the street, brandishing their pikes, in order to strip the constituted authorities of their legitimacy. Sovereignty moved into the street. Power was in the street—not in the National Assembly, not at Versailles, not in the Tuileries. There is something flawed in this dynamic. Yet we've had a lot of trouble challenging the idea of sovereignty by show of hands.

J.-P. S.: To me, radicalism has always seemed an essential element in the leftist stance. If we reject radicalism, we ourselves contribute in no small way to the death of the left. On the other hand, I do recognize that radicalism leads to an impasse. If we maintain that this or that action must be radical, that it must be carried out to the very end, and if we fail to take into account the fact that an action always takes place in the context of other actions that naturally are going to modify it, we are talking nonsense.

B. L.: And yet, we have said just that—you as well as I.

J.-P. S.: We have said it, but we must recognize that we were wrong. An action must be carried out, but there comes a moment when, because of pressure emanating from other actions outside, the original action may be able to follow its course only by slightly modifying itself—which is to say, if those who execute it will accept competition from other persons or other actions of a different origin, by accepting compromises. . . . So, if you agree, we will say that the essence of radicalism lies not so much in the end pursued as in the intention to pursue the end. As Kantian morality would have it, intention is primary; it is the intention that must be radical. However, this does not imply that along the road we then follow toward the realization of the end we have purposely and radically wanted to be radical—it does not imply that we cannot be led to use means different from those we had first conceived; and so, when the action comes to its conclusion, it differs a little from what it was at the outset. . . .

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B.L.: Let's go back to this idea about the intention that becomes the very doorway to radicalism.

J.-P. S.: Necessarily, even by definition, the intention is the apprehension of the goal. Therefore, to say that the intention is radical is to say that it envisages a radical goal. Simply, radicalism derives from the intention itself, not from the goal as such. What I mean to say is this: in history, very often, we encounter individuals or social groups who seem to be pursuing the same goal. They are united, they say the same things; yet little by little, we see that they are pursuing very different goals. This is because their intentions are different. Intentions are different because behind what appears to be their common meaning, the different groups see their own truths. And we see that what is common to all the groups is a more or less uncertain formulation of purpose, but not the goal itself.

B.L.: This is very important. It means that to date revolutionary associations have been based on misunderstandings.

J.-P. S.: Very often.

B. L.: So, when we try to reject the idea of an association that simply may be based on a misunderstanding, we're looking instead for an association based on intentions. To be radical, then, would be to pursue in a radical way a scattering of intentions to the point where they achieve a unity.

J.-P. S.: Yes, insofar as that is possible.

B. L.: It was one hell of a mistake to say, the way we used to: We have a goal—revolution—and since you don't make an omelet without breaking eggs, to reach this goal it's okay to get your hands dirty. There

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was a flaw in that line of reasoning. It's not a question of denying the nastiness, the shit, the blood. No, the flaw is in the goal, the worm in the fruit. From the moment there was confusion about the goal, confusion was inevitably going to ensue about the unity of end and means, and that confusion could have negative, even criminal consequences. But if, as we tend today to express it, the goal—by which I mean the radical perspective of the *intention*—moves throughout history —.

J.-P. S.: It is trans-historical.

B. L.: Yes.

J.-P. S.: And, in that sense it does not belong to history. The goal appears *in* history but does not belong *to* history.

B. L.: There's a problem about the use of means, the techniques of action. But that will have to be rethought in terms of its being subordinate to a trans-historical goal. The goal is no longer to seize power, as Lenin thought. The fundamental question is,What is the nature of the goal? How one is to understand it, exactly.

J.-P. S.: Yes. The first thing is to define clearly what trans-historical means, and to specify what goal we can talk of since, historically, seizing power used to be a goal: in a given society, at a given moment of its development, one seized power, and that meant that some very specific people by the name, say, of Louis XVI or Robespierre got their comeuppance. What has always been the ultimate goal of insurgents or revolutionaries, the thing they wanted without being able to name it, without perceiving it clearly? That is what we must define.

B. L.: Exactly. So, the word "fraternity," which has been used to characterize the confused and emotional ensemble we term the "left," contains an element we must pick up, and that is the fraternal *intention*, the suggestion of a genuine experience of fraternity. In this connection, we can recognize our relationship to the rebel of 1792. But we must not think of this intention in terms of the schema of radicalization, of show-of-hands sovereignty, of direct participatory democracy as opposed to fraudulent representative government—no; that's done for. From now on, we must consider the solution of the 1793 insurgent a false solution, and therefore that of the leftist false, too. Ergo, we must restudy the problem that lies at the root of the false reaction—namely, the problem of democracy.

J.-P. S.: Which is to say, study democracy without thinking of it in terms of either direct or indirect democracy. Take it as a whole, and see what the relationship is between democracy and fraternity, which is the primary principle that established democracy and has always been part of it. Because for me, and I believe for you, too, democracy seems to be not only a form of government, or a way of delegating power, but also a way of life. One lives democratically and, in my view, today human beings should live in that way and in no other. One must find out whether today people are living in democracy and democratically, and find out what they mean by "democracy." I think that, to begin with, we must take the term as it is popularly understood, and examine the idea of democracy in its political form, because that is the simplest.

B. L.: It's not that it's the simplest, it's the only approach there is.

J.-P. S.: The word "democracy" has a meaning that has become obsolete. Etymologically, it means government by the people. But it is quite obvious that in modern democracies there is no "people" to govern because "the people" does not exist. There was a people under the old regime, and in 1793. Today, there is no longer anything one could call the people, because the way men live is entirely particularized by the division of labor; human beings have no relationship with each other except through their work and for the fact that here in France every five or six or seven years they perform one very specific act, which is to get a piece of paper with some names on it, [mark it] and drop it in a box. I do not consider that there is such a thing as the power of the people.

In the 18th century, and during the Rev-

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olution, life was not broken up as it is today. At the present time, a man who votes does not do it in the same way as the man who lived under the Terror, or earlier. That is to say, voting is a fragmentary act that has no connection with his work or with the totality of his personal concerns. In 1793, voting was not merely an isolated action in a person's life. It was the act for the sake of which one was politically involved, for which, in a way, one existed. The significance of the vote has changed, which is why we are not ahead of but losing momentum with respect to the French Revolution.

B. L.: Just so. But couldn't one say that today, through a long experience with universal suffrage, we have traveled the whole road, running from hot to cold. The vote, I agree, started out being hot. Today it is cold. But at least the vote allowed for a linkage between hot and cold, if I may put it so. And that's exactly what we were denying when we used to shout "Elections are a trap for morons!" Wasn't that partly a mistake? All right, there were times when the first vote was a hot vote. There still are such times—for example, right after the Pink Revolution in Portugal, where they hadn't voted for almost 40 years. But we know that now the vote is going from hot to cold. And that's precisely the problem we want to resolve—this going from hot to cold. I agree about the vote's being no final solution, since in moving from hot to cold one loses heat progressively. That's understood. But we should reject the false solution, which consists of yelling hot hot hot, down with warm! Universal suffrage has at least one merit—it points to a numerical unity, a complete series; it doesn't conjure away the category of "all," without which "fraternity" is in danger of no longer meaning anything.

J.-P. S.: Let's understand each other. There have always been categories of people from whom other people have wished to withhold the right to vote.

B. L.: Agreed. But there, precisely, is an example of good radicalism, of good radicalization: all the battles fought in the 19th century and for a part of the 20th to radicalize universal suffrage, to win true universality for the ballot. To give a more effective meaning to the "all."

J.-P. S.: You're right. One might simply ask oneself, What does that "all" mean? What does the institution known as the vote mean, for example? In other words, what is the relationship among the different individuals who go to drop their ballots into the ballot boxes when what will emerge from the voting is a constitution, or a law—in a word, a certain way of being "all," as you put it? But what was registered on those ballots was a liaison of individuals among themselves; it was still not the vote, for that had still to take place. What was there was the fact that every citizen, every voter lives in a milieu, lives in a group together with other people who at least partly condition him—for example, in the area of ideas from outside that introduce him to large general theories that he will be expressing in his vote. Therefore, people have an initial relationship among themselves that exists prior to the vote and without which the vote would be impossible. Those who go to the polls come from the same neighborhood, sometimes from the same family; they have long shared their ideas. Their vote is nothing but the expression of all that communality.

B. L.: Do you mean to repeat what Marx used to say—that the vote is the expression of political man and is derived from the fundamental expression of concrete social relationships, relationships of production?

J.-P. S.: In a sense, yes, except that I don't believe the relationship of production is the primary one. With respect to the vote, it is primary, yes. Workers who have established themselves in the city, inhabit the same neighborhood, who in a general way do the same kinds of work, and who will go to the polls. . . . But to me that is not the essential thing. What unites them more profoundly than bonds of production, what makes them mean something to each other that is more than their being producers is the fact that they are human beings. This is what one must try to study. We must try to

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study what it means to be a person, and to be capable—together with one's neighbor who is also a person—of producing laws, institutions, of making of oneself, via the vote, a citizen. That distinction of Marx's about superstructures is a fine bit of work, but it's utterly false, because the primary relationship—individual to individual—is something else again, and that is what we must discover now.

B. L.: Didn't you feel you'd found it in *Search for a Method*?

J.-P. S.: I was looking for it, but I was looking for something else, too. What's more, I haven't written the second volume. As you know, I set *Search for a Method* aside because it seemed not to have matured within me. I couldn't manage to cope with it. The point is, if I were to consider society as I viewed it in *Search for a Method*, I would claim that fraternity has little place in it. If, on the contrary, I take society as being the result of a bond among people that's more fundamental than politics, then I take it that people should have, or can have, or do have a primary relationship, which is that of fraternity.

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B. L.: Why is fraternity the primary relationship? We're not all offspring of the same father.

J.-P, S.: No, but the family relationship is primary with respect to any other relationship.

B. L.: People form a single family?

J.-P. S.: In a certain way, people form a single family.

B. L.: How do you understand this primary connection?

J.-P. S.: For every person birth is the same phenomenon that it is for his neighbor, so much so that, in a way, two men who talk to each other have the same mother. Not the empirical mother, of course, but a mother without eyes, without a face. It's a strange sort of notion, but the two of us share it as, for that matter, do we all. To belong to the same species is, in a way, to have the same parents. In that sense, we are brothers. Actually, that is how people define the human species—in terms not so much of biological characteristics as of a certain relationship that obtains among us, the relationship of fraternity. It is the relationship of being born of the same mother. That's what I meant.

B. L.: In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates has just spelled out all the requirements of the just city—each class has its place, and so on—and then he says, Oh dear, oh dear, I've one more thing to add, it's tiresome to mention it but I really should. One more thing is required: all those people must be made to believe that they are brothers, they must be made to believe that they are all sons of the same mother, and—well, let's say that this mother is Earth. Let's put it that way, and then people will believe that they've all come from the same earth, therefore they are all brothers. Of course, the nature of each differs, which explains why one will be a warrior, another a ploughman, another a magistrate; but, basically, they're all brothers. So, *the* mother, the mother you're talking to me about, thanks to a pious or a cynical lie, risks becoming the Earth in the Greek sense of the term, and can become Earth in the modern sense of the term—the nation.

J.-P. S.: I've never taken Socrates' phrase to be a pious lie, really. He actually means that men are brothers. But he doesn't manage to say it right, to define the kind of truth that the statement must be made to convey. So he makes it into a myth.

B. L.: All right, Socrates' meaning can be salvaged. Nonetheless, the fact remains that he's tripped over a difficulty that is very much of the moment, and that threatens the whole structure. How can the mind avoid stumbling into mythology when the problem is getting to the essential of how to be together—that is, how to practice fraternity?

J.-P. S.: It has nothing to do with myth. Fraternity is the relationship members of

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the species have with one another. Thousands of years ago, the initial social division was the clan, which was distinguished by its totem. The totem embraced the entire clan, and it provided a profound reality for all members of the tribe in their relationship with one another—for example, it prevented them from intermarrying. And that relationship was fraternity. I mean that the great concept of the clan, its matrilineal unity—deriving from an animal, for example, that allegedly engendered them all—that's what one must rediscover today, for that was true fraternity. In a certain sense it was myth, no doubt about it, but it was also truth.

B. L.: Aren't you doing now what Socrates tended to do? When faced with a problem, fall back on myth?

J.-P. S.: No, I believe not, because what I mean is that the myth is invented by the people in the group only in order to account for a relationship among them—the group relationship. In other words, they invent—without knowing that they are inventing—a creature that has engendered them all; as a result, they are all brothers. Why? Because originally they felt they were brothers. Afterward, their invention gave a certain sense *to* this fraternity, but it was not the invention that gave the sense *of* fraternity. It was just the reverse.

B. L.: But our problem is that we must not go back to myth in order to formulate this original idea of fraternity. How will we avoid the trap Socrates fell into?

J.-P. S.: We're not falling into the trap: all men are brothers in the clan inasmuch as they are born of the same woman, who is represented by the totem. And at that moment, the individuality of the woman is not at issue. It's a woman who simply has the womb that will develop, the breast that will nourish, perhaps the back that will carry. This woman can just as well be a totemic bird.

B. L.: But you do agree, don't you, not to eliminate reference to a biological origin? Otherwise, one is saying "fraternity" but could as well say something else, no matter what—equality, for example. But, in fact, you have seemed to me very much drawn to the idea of fraternity, and no longer as attached to the idea of equality, as you used to be. So, one must find a formulation that accepts the biological reference as an assumption but can also be expanded on a level that is no longer biological and that is not mythological.

J.-P. S.: That's it. So, then, what is this relationship between one human being and another that will be called fraternity? It is not the relationship of equality. It is a relationship in which the motivations for an act come from the affective realm, while the action itself is in the practical domain. Which is to say the relationship between a man and his neighbor in a society in which they are brothers is, first of all, affective/practical. Originally, people shared awareness of that, you might say, but now it is a gift that has to be rediscovered.

When I see a man, I think, his origin is the same as mine; he comes as do I from, let's say, mother-humanity, from mother-earth, as Socrates said, or from mother —

B. L.: What is this mother, humanity, earth? We're still mixed up with mythology. Is there any way to break away from the mythological level?

J.-P. S.: What is not mythological but what is real is, I think, the relationship of you to me and of me to you. We call the relationship of a man to his neighbor fraternal because they feel they are of the same origin. They have a common origin and, in future, a common end. Their common origin and end—that's what constitutes their fraternity.

B. L.: Is this a true, a thinkable experience?

J.-P. S.: I think that the total, truly thinkable experience will exist when the goal that all men have within them—the creation of the human being—will have been achieved. At that moment, it will be possible to say that men will all be the products of a common origin, not because of the sex of mother or father but thanks to an ensemble of measures that will have been taken

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over thousands of years and in the end produces human beings. Then there will be true fraternity.

B. L.: I understand. And what today prefigures this end result?

J.-P. S.: The fact that there is a morality.

B. L.: In our current experience, how can one say "fraternity" without resorting to mythology?

J.-P. S.: Because fraternity lies in the future. So there is no reason to appeal to mythology, which is always of the past. Fraternity is what human beings will be in relation to each other when through all our history they will be able to say of themselves that they are all bound to each other in feeling and in action. Morality is indispensable, for it signifies that men or submen have a future based on principles of common action, while simultaneously there is shaping up around them a future based on materiality—which means, basically, on scarcity. This is to say that what I have is yours, what you have is mine; if I am in need, you give to me, and if you are in need I give to you—that is the future of morality. And men have specific needs, which their external situation does not allow them to satisfy. There is always less than there should be, less food to meet human needs, and fewer people who are engaged in producing that food. We are surrounded by scarcity, which is a real fact. We always lack something.

There are two approaches, and both are human but seem not to be compatible; yet we must try to live with both at the same time. There is the effort to engender Man, to achieve human beings; this is the moral relationship. And there is the battle against scarcity.

B. L.: Whence comes violence, according to your *Search for a Method*. And I would like to remind you of something you wrote in your Introduction to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* [also published as *The Damned*]. Speaking of colonized man, you say, "He is the son of violence, every moment he draws his humanity from violence." You didn't write "son of the mother;" no, "son of violence." Violence is here the midwife of history, as in Engels.

J.-P. S.: It's not the same.

B. L.: I don't see why not. But this is my question: Can humanity be engendered in violence like that? Understand me, now. I'm not asking, Does violence exist or not? Nor am I asking you, Is violence necessary on certain occasions? No, my question is less broad: Can violence really have the redemptive role you invested it with at that time?

J.-P. S.: If we take the case of Algeria, of which I was talking in my introduction to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, I state first of all that it was never a question of there being a solution other than through violence. The colons never envisaged a solution that could have been acceptable to the Algerians. There were two absolutely opposed points of view that could lead only to violence. This violence brought about the return of the colons to France.

B. L.: That wasn't my question!

J.-P. S.: Wait! Of course, violence is not going to step up the pace of history and draw humanity together. Violence merely breaks up a kind of enslavement that makes it impossible for one to become a human being. But the moment violence has destroyed the colonized character, that is, the slave character, what remains are still submen. They no longer suffer certain restraints but they will find others elsewhere to replace them—as in Algeria. Yet, through all that, they will be trying to draw nearer to being the Active Citizen, who still is as far removed from Man as he is from the colonized subman of yesterday.

B. L.: You used to say, This fraternal love [of the Algerian rebels] is the opposite of the hatred they feel for us; they are brothers in that they all have killed. You're no longer of this opinion?

J.-P. S.: I'm no longer of that opinion.

B. L.: The question is, Does one come to know brotherhood through the labor that consists in killing one's enemy?

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J.-P. S.: No. But in all truth, I still don't see clearly the real relationship between violence and fraternity.

B. L.: Are people brothers inasmuch as they are the children of violence? Or does one discover fraternity first and then, when one runs into obstacles that cannot be surmounted by other means, one resorts to the tactic of forced growth? Does one then use this or that type of limited violence, without ethical finality, which comes from the experience of fraternity?

J.-P. S.: A moral system requires that the idea of fraternity be extended until it becomes the manifest, unique relationship among all human beings, this being first of all a group relationship—appropriately, of small groups bound somehow to the idea of family. In a remote past, fraternity was just that. It is closed off by the group. It is the tendency one or more others have to break into the group, to crash the frontier that binds fraternity within it, which gives birth to violence, the very opposite of fraternity. That is what I would say today.

III
Hope, Now . . .

BENNY LÉVY: How would you account for the fact that in your work there is a profound inclination toward an ethic of violence? For example, why the exaltation of violence in your Introduction to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*?

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: There, I can say, it resulted from the wars in Algeria and Indochina, both of which filled me with horror. Because, as you know, ever since the age of nineteen, my one political response was to loathe colonialism. The only way I then saw to get quit of colonialism was violence. Violence that one could call just, the violence of the colonized against the colonizer.

B. L.: But you build it up so! When we used to do that in an editorial in *La Cause du People* it was normal, if I may say so. Militant stupidity was at issue. But you, what pushed you to do it?

J.-P. S.: At the time I was seeing a lot of Fanon, who was deeply violent, and that certainly accounted for the style of his book. There was also the fact that we were in a troubling position since, however one looks at it, we were struggling *against* France and for the Algerians, who didn't care very much for us even though we were on their side. That put us in quite a special situation, which found expression in that book, a situation of malaise, of greater violence, and because it came more easily, of intransigence. France is something that is real for me. I found it very disagreeable to be against my country.

B. L.: You told me one day—apropos of your Introduction of *The Wretched of the Earth*—that you wrote a first draft and then, systematically, revised the style of your Introduction to reinforce the violence in Fanon's book. . . . But in your writing about the Resistance, you did not exalt violence —

J.-P. S.: The Resistance fighters who were blowing up railroad cars and the people who were writing were one and the same. In the case of the Algerians, they were not the same. That is the difference. Whether I was or wasn't blowing up railway tracks, everyone was up to his neck in the same business.

B. L.: The enemy was brutal during the Occupation. Why didn't you work out an ethic of regenerative violence at that time?

J.-P. S.: We ourselves were people who

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were employing violence, directly or indirectly. Also, as I have told you, in a France that had been schooled before the war to feel a profound repugnance for violence, we were not people who liked to say, Violence is splendid, it's right to do that. We had to think of the murders, the bombs that were exploding, and so forth, as something we were *forced* to do, of violence almost as a necessary evil.

B. L.: Why did you move from necessary evil to —

J.-P. S.: If I saw, and wished, that the Algerians might be less violent than they were, I would have been compromising with other Frenchmen. I would have been recaptured by France again. It was necessary for me to see the Algerians as men who were mistreated, crucified by France, who were fighting against the French because the French were unjust. And I was French, I was unjust like other Frenchmen. There was a collective responsibility; but at the same time I approved—and that is where I set myself apart from the majority of other Frenchmen—I approved these tortured people's struggle against the French.

B. L.: Verbal violence as national self-flagellation?

J.-P. S.: In part, yes; in part, surely.

B.L.: Our problem today is simple. If the idea of revolution becomes identified with the idea of terrorism, it's done for. To restore meaning, if possible, to the idea of revolution, it is essential to settle the fraternity/terror business once and for all. Of course, one can choose to abandon all idea of revolution by taking it for a very costly, poetic illusion. To this there are two objections. The first is factual: there are rebellions. The second touches on the legitimacy of the rebellion: the legitimacy derives from what we used to call social aspiration. Against the illusion—which is in no way poetic—that human unity has been achieved and prevails in current social conditions, a rebellion raises the true, profound issue of unification; the unity of the human enterprise is still to be formed. If Kant is right in reducing the idea of an ethical community to the ideal of a totality of men, then the uprising is a call to an ethical order: the forgotten are making themselves heard.

J.-P. S.: Develop your idea further.

B. L.: I wonder whether one must not rethink the workings of insurrection and analytically distinguish its several elements or phases. Fraternity first appears at the end of a long maturation, the birth of a relationship lived as a human experience. Of course, one thinks of what we have all learned from July 14th [Bastille Day, July 14, 1789]. But to come closer to us in time, Foucault said he had seen the general will on the streets of Teheran. At such a moment, the employment of certain forms of violence is akin to a cesarean section: the problem is to remove an obstacle to birth. To say that the phenomenon of fraternity is sustained essentially by recourse to violence would be, in a way, like saying that for a child to be born calls not for the union of a man and a woman and the maturation of the embryo, but that what basically counts is the surgery.

The fact remains, of course, that a displacement occurs in the course of the insurrectional process: it was very apparent in [the Paris student revolt of] 1968 that the significance of the event was no longer the emerging, the birth, but rather the confrontation—the "tearing," in both the social and erotic sense Georges Bataille meant. That is the sacred moment, and that of fraternity/terror, too.

J.-P. S.: You're forgetting that the other—the enemy—is constantly on the move, and that this is what provokes the way in which each of the two moments you described manifests itself.

B. L.: Be careful of the word "provokes." In the beginning, for the demonstrator, the riot policeman or the ordinary solider—no matter which—is practically a brother, like a fellow demonstrator. Sure, inasmuch as the soldier is identified with the obstacle to be removed, he's a misguided brother, not a real brother. But in any case, the essential thing is the formation of this fraternity; it provides the

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strength, the almost miraculous strength of insurrection. At that point, one notes how hatred is almost totally absent. Including, and I say this to you again, hatred for the soldier. On the other hand, in a second moment, the sacred moment, just as the tearing becomes essential, the insurgent is chained to the policeman who is trying to shoot him down. Somehow, the insurgent has need of his adversary, the way two lips need each other in order to part. It is, in fact, the violence of repression that gives insurgents the necessary unity. People no longer know clearly whether they are brothers or are brothers only inasmuch as they are attacking a soldier. Is it the adversary who confers unity, or has one acquired a positive unification? The two things blend from there on.

So, the idea that insurrectional unity comes about thanks to confrontation, to the fact that people become brothers against the Other, the compact enemy, is obviously going to bring about the radicalization we were criticizing a moment ago, a kind of Machiavellianism of the insurgent who will try to provoke the enemy in order to strengthen the corps of insurgent brothers. But doesn't this notion of the corps in itself testify to a degeneration of the fraternal experience? There are some factions that are tearing each other apart, there is inertia, the inability to resolve long-concealed problems, and at this point one uses the weapon par excellence—hatred for the Other—like the hatred for the aristocrats in 1789, or for Americans today in Iran. In fact, the positive move toward unification is halted, and the resort to this form of negative unity, which has been brought about by the old authority, serves to camouflage the standstill. And there you have the moment at which revolutionary policy is perversely applied.

J.-P. S.: Which is a third moment.

B. L.: Yes. Leninism is a good case in point. It refers to the positive moment, but it functions totally by taking off from a negative unity: according to Leninism, it's a question of building an ironclad unity in response to governmental unity. As soon as positive unification runs out of steam, Leninism is tremendously effective.

Did we not see something different in '68? We saw that one had to think of the human assembly in the context of an absence of political power. What does that mean? Must one deny power? Certainly not. Consider power the absolute evil, and steer clear of it? Absolutely not. No, the power vacuum is merely the knowledge, which is essential, that below the government, in the political meaning of the word "government," a void has formed. That government lacks a foundation. That's the marvellous revelation that comes at the beginning of an uprising. That's what makes the demonstrator say, "Everything is possible." And it's true: in a sense, everything is possible. And what to do to keep this revelation from foundering in political delirium? Perhaps the answer to that must be: by not pushing it to the absolute test. The uprising is just one moment in the long labor of human unification, only *one* facet of the fraternal experience, say, a facet of our relationship to the mother.

J.-P. S.: In general, I agree with your account of the three moments in which violence appears. But I want a more developed description of the first two—and even of the third. We'll see to this in the book we will devote to a study of moral thought. . . .

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B. L.: Perhaps too little attention has been paid to the significance of a certain distrust of the revolutionary mob on the part of Jews. Perhaps we have not examined closely enough what this distrust may conceal. Could not the Jew, especially a Jew who lives in a Christian society, sense in the revolutionary mob a potential of the pogrom mob? Has he not experienced the perversion we're now trying to criticize?

J.-P. S.: Don't forget that there were a considerable number of Jews in the Communist party in 1917. In a way, one could even say that it was they who led the revolution. So there's something that doesn't entirely jibe with what you're saying.

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B. L.: I'm talking, of course, about the Jew who has continued to be a Jew. This Jew knows that he is threatened when a mob starts to think of itself as a mystical body. Experience makes it impossible for him to see the plebe as a simple example of resistance. On the other hand, he can distinguish between what in a revolutionary movement springs from fraternal truth and what comes from the sacred and terrorist threats. Doesn't that lead us to the following conclusion: the Jewish experience is essential to a rethinking of the revolution, and one must take the full measure of that experience. The Jew is doubly concerned by our problem. First of all, he cannot help but recognize the messianic idea, which is at the source of the revolutionary idea, all its perversions notwithstanding. Second, he stands to be the first to suffer from perversions of this idea. Ergo, it becomes obligatory to understand the idea, to restore its meaning.

J.-P. S.: I think you're not wrong.

B. L.: From this point of view, the present intellectual moment presents a danger. Pretty much everywhere, messianism is being pictured as the source of all our ills. When the "new right" chooses messianism as its target, it cashes in. What's most serious is the fact that the left, too, finds it good form to attack all forms of messianism. But has anyone stopped to ask himself what messianism, Hebraic messianism, is? No. People act as if everyone knew. When will they recognize that we do not all know, but that we most urgently need to know? Can people possibly still forget that what we find at the bottom of anti-Semitism is ignorance?

J.-P. S.: When I was writing *Anti-Semite and Jew*, for me messianism was a meaningless idea. Now it has acquired a richer meaning, and that is thanks in part to our talking together.

B. L.: At the time of *Anti-Semite and Jew*, you thought that the Jew—let's put this provocatively—was an invention of anti-Semites. In any event, according to you there was no such thing as Jewish thought, no such thing as Jewish history. Have you changed your way of thinking?

J.-P. S.: No. I keep that as a superficial description of the Jew as he is in the Christian world, where, for example, he is constantly being snapped at from all sides by anti-Semitic ideas, where an anti-Semitic way of thinking consumes him, tries to seize him at the very deepest part of his being and turn him into what it conceives him to be. Of course, the Jew is the victim of anti-Semitism. Only, I confined the existence of the Jew to that. I now think there is a Jewish reality beyond the ravages anti-Semitism has inflicted on Jews; there is a profound Jewish reality, as there is a Christian reality. Very different, of course, but of the same kind with respect to certain basic matters. The Jew believes that he has a destiny. I will have to explain how I came to think that.

B. L.: I was about to ask you.

J.-P. S.: It came from being more often with Jews after the Liberation. Before that, I was acquainted with some, of course, but I had no close ties with Jews. Afterward, I got to know Claude Lanzmann, who became one of my very good friends. Later, I adopted my daughter, who is Jewish—Arlette—and as a result we were often living together, and I know how she thinks. And then I met you, and we have worked together, and we also have had some time for being together in a more relaxed, daily-living kind of way. As a result, I have a much broader view of Jewish concerns. That's essentially what has changed, I think. At bottom, until writing *Anti-Semite and Jew*, I was hostile primarily to anti-Semitism, and that book is a declaration of war against anit-Semites, nothing more.

B. L.: I was seventeen years old when I read the book, and it served admirably to justify my wanting to fight anti-Semitism. But at the same time, you were assuring me that if that war were won, I would discover what I dreamed of discovering—that I am a man, not a Jew. The book also obscurely

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justified a kind of self-denial. And please note, I didn't think that at the time.

J.-P. S.: It's possible. You felt it that way, and I think other people may have taken it in the same way. It was because in the book the reality of the Jew is lacking. You will note that essentially this reality is metaphysical, as is the Christian's, and at that time that reality held very little place in my philosophy. There was a consciousness of self that I stripped of all individual characteristics that would have come from within and that I then caused to be found on the outside. Once the Jew was deprived of metaphysical and subjective characteristics, he could not exist as a Jew in my philosophy. Today I see men differently. I've taken pains to look for what the inner reality of the Jew could be. But there you are: to be able to understand the Jew from within—that I really cannot do. I would have to be one.

B. L.: Why were you able to do it with Gustave Flaubert?

J.-P. S.: Because Gustave Flaubert gave me much more information than a Jew does. Most of the significant things about the Jews are written in foreign languages—especially in Hebrew, sometimes in Yiddish.

B. L.: You could perhaps have overcome that obstacle.

J.-P. S.: It's not an absolute obstacle for a Frenchman who doesn't know Hebrew; he has simply to learn it. But there is a lot of time between when he begins and when he will be able to read the books that matter to him. In short, I cannot know Jewish reality in depth, but I am able to see some principles, some beginnings of the roads that could lead me to it.

B. L.: But when you wrote your book surely you had put together some documentation?

J.-P. S.: No.

B. L.: What do you mean, no?

J.-P. S.: None. I wrote without any documentation, without reading one Jewish book.

B. L.: But how did you do it?

J.-P. S.: I wrote what I thought.

B. L.: But taking off from what?

J.-P. S.: Taking off from nothing, taking off from anti-Semitism, which I wanted to combat.

B. L.: If you'd opened no matter what book—for example, Salo Baron's history of the Jews, which you've just read—perhaps it would have persuaded you not to write that there is no Jewish history.

J.-P. S.: While I was reading Baron, I realized that the point of view I held at that earlier time would not have been shaken.

B. L.: Why not?

J.-P. S.: Because at the time I said there was no Jewish history I was thinking of history in a certain well-defined sense—the history of France, the history of Germany, the history of America, of the United States. In any case, the history of a sovereign political entity that has its own territory and relations with other states like itself. Whereas one would have had to conceive of history differently if one wanted to say that there is a Jewish history. One would have had to conceive of Jewish history not only as a dissemination of Jews throughout the world but also as the unity of the Diaspora, the unity of dispersed Jews.

B. L.: In his deepest reality, then, the Jew can permit himself to drop out as far as the philosophy of history is concerned.

J.-P. S.: Exactly. The philosophy of history is not the same if there is or if there is not a Jewish history. But there is a Jewish history, obviously.

B. L.: In other words, the history that Hegel established in our intellectual landscape sought to have done with the Jews, and it is the Jew who will make it possible to emerge from the view of history Hegel wanted to impose on us.

J.-P. S.: Absolutely, because this proves that there is a real unity of Jews in historical time, and that real unity is not due to their being gathered together on a historical territory but to actions and writings and bonds

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that do not derive from the idea of a homeland, or haven't done so for some years.

B. L.: According to you, what does this unity of Jewish reality come from?

J.-P. S.: That's exactly what I've tried to understand. But all things considered, I believe that with the Jew the essential thing is that for several thousand years he has had a bond with a single god; he has been a monotheist, and that's what distinguished him from all the other ancient peoples who all had many gods, and that's what made the Jew autonomous and absolutely essential. What's more, this relationship with God was very special. Gods have always had relationships with men, of course. Jupiter had connections with men, he slept with women—in a word, he changed himself into a man when he wished to, so there's nothing new about that.

What is new is the relationship this God entered into with men. It was an immediate relationship that the Jews had with what they used to call YHWH, Yahweh, which is to say, God. God spoke to the Jew, the Jew heard His word, and the reality to emerge from all this was a first metaphysical liaison of Jewish man with the infinite. That, I believe, is the primary definition of the ancient Jew, the man whose entire life was somehow determined, governed, by his relationship with God. And the whole history of the Jews consists in the primary relationship.

For example, the great event that changed the life of the Jews—considerably—and that made them people who, in general, suffered as exiles or martyrs was the advent of Christianity; that is, of another religion with one god. So there were two monotheisms, and the second monotheism—although it took its inspiration from the first and took the Bible as its holy book—was nonetheless instantly hostile to the Jewish people.

B. L.: Tell me, how does the relationship to a single god, this destiny of Israel, matter to you?

J.-P. S.: Well, it's not YHWH that has any meaning for me. The essential thing for me is that the Jew has lived, and still lives, metaphysically.

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B. L.: So it is the metaphysical character of the Jew that interests you?

J.-P. S.: It's his metaphysical character, which has come from his religion.

B. L.: Of course. And that, then, is what interests you?

J.-P. S.: That. But also the fact that the Jew has a destiny.

B. L.: It's the same thing, isn't it?

J.-P. S.: It's not entirely the same thing. It means something very precise. The Jewish religion implies that this world will end and, at the same moment, another world will appear—another world that will be made of this one but in which things will be differently arranged. Another theme I like is that the Jewish dead—and others too, for that matter—will be reborn, they will return to earth. Contrary to the Christian concept, they—the Jewish dead—have no existence other than that of the grave, but they will be reborn as living beings in this new world. This new world is to be the end.

B. L.: What is there about this that interests you?

J.-P. S.: The finality—to which every Jew is more or less consciously inclined. It is finality that is to reunite humanity in the end. . . . It is this end, which is social as well as religious and which only the Jewish people —

B. L.: It's clear why you could be receptive to the idea of the end of human prehistory, which you found in Marx. But today—how can this Jewish messianic end interest you today?

J.-P. S.: Precisely because it has no Marxist aspect. I mean, it is not an end that is defined in terms of the present situation and then projected into the future, one that will be attained by stages through the development of certain facts of existence today.

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B. L.: Can you put that more exactly?

J.-P. S.: The Jewish end has none of that. If you like, it's the beginning of the existence of men who live for each other. Which is to say, it is a moral end. Or, more exactly, it is morality. The Jew thinks that the end of this world and the rising up of the other will mean the emergence of the ethical existence of men who live for one another.

B. L.: Yes, but the Jew isn't waiting for the end of this world as you've described it to accept his responsibility for an ethical system.

J.-P. S.: We non-Jews are searching for an ethic, too. The question is to find the final end—that is, the moment when, in truth, morality will be simply the way in which human beings live in relation to each other. The rules-and-prescriptions aspect of morality that prevails today will doubtless no longer exist—as has often been said, for that matter. Morality will have to do with the way in which men form their thoughts, their feelings —

B. L.: Yes, but the Jew has thought that it is possible to go beyond the law—if the term can still be used innocently—go beyond it from above, not from below. Once you put the law in parentheses, or bracket it, you prepare the way for the abolition of all law. Modern man has hoped he could circumvent rules from below. By breaking them or by decreeing that all idea of law was null and void.

J.-P. S.: Absolutely. That is why, moreover, for me messianism is an important thing that only the Jews have thought of in this way, but that non-Jews could utilize for other ends.

B. L.: Why for other ends?

J.-P. S.: Because the end-goal of the non-Jews with whom I identify is revolution. And what does one mean by "revolution"? The replacement of present-day society by a more just society in which people will be able to have good relationships with each other. This concept of revolution has existed for a long time.

Revolutionaries want to bring about a society that will be humane and satisfying for all human beings, but they forget that a society of this kind is not a society of fact; it is a society, one might say, of right. That is, a society in which the relationships among human beings are moral. Well, one can truly think of this kind of ethic as the ultimate goal of revolution through a kind of messianism. There will be immense economic problems, of course, but, quite contrary to what Marx and the Marxists claim, they are not the essential problems. Their solution is, in some cases, one means of securing a true rapport among men.

B. L.: Don't forget that the Jew has a long experience with false messiahs. The conjunction of Jew and leftist, even assuming a redefinition of "leftist," is certainly not to be taken as a matter or course.

J.-P. S.: And yet, the Jewish reality must remain in the revolution. It must contribute the power of morality.

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B. L.: In short—since we have to stop this talk now soon—you're beginning afresh at seventy-five?

J.-P. S.: Actually, the same thing has happened to me twice in my life—to be tempted by despair, I mean. The first time was in the years from 1939 to 1945. I was coming to the end of my youth, I was not active politically, I was busy and concerned with literature, I was living among friends, I was happy, my life lay before me. Then the war came, and little by little, especially after the defeat and during the German Occupation, I felt as if I was completely denied the world I had thought I had before me. I was confronting a world of suffering, of evil, and of despair, But I rejected the possibility of falling into despair, as was happening so often around me, and I allied myself with friends who were not despairing, who believed that you could fight for an auspicious future although there was no possibility whatever that this future might exist. One had to resist, no question about

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it, but the true fortunes of war lay outside our hands, with the British, the Americans. . . . It was then that I felt the nonexistence, the daily banality that was threatening every Frenchman and was threatening me. And if, in spite of everything, I believed that the Nazi might would recede and that the war would end, it was because of something in me—hope—which was never routed for long. Then the war did end. From that time on, I have had a life that has not always been happy but has been strongly marked by altercations, causes to be defended with intellectual beliefs that sometimes threatened to give way to despair—as during the Korean War—but quickly recovered. And then, little by little, once again something began to become undone. In 1975, I was still the same man who had been stirred by May '68 and who, basically, was trying to associate his ideas with those of the Sixty-eighters without too many conflicts. Then the international scene became what it is now—that is, a triumph for rightist ideas, at least on the part of governments, in almost all nations.

B. L.: You're including the Soviet Union among the nations with rightist ideas?

J.-P. S.: Naturally. And the Americans, the Swedes —

B. L.: The Swedes?

J.-P. S.: Yes. Their new government is on the right, although for years Sweden stood to the left. It was a funny world, for that matter, which we other pro-Marxists couldn't acknowledge because it was socialist, yet not Marxist. To us that seemed a suspect quantity. In short, in all nations today the right is riding high. On the other hand, there's a tendency toward a rebirth of the cold war. The invasion of Afghanistan is a particularly disturbing fact. A third world war is not impossible, due to causes that are all wrong, all badly thought out. Ours is now a planet that belongs, on the one hand, to the poor who are extremely poor, who die of hunger, and, on the other hand, to the small number of rich people who are beginning to be less rich but who, even so, are still comfortably off.

What with this third world war that can explode one day, and the wretched hodgepodge of things our planet has become, despair has come back to tempt me with the idea that there is no end to it all, that there is no goal, that there are only little individual objectives for which one fights. We make little revolutions, but there is no human goal. There is not anything that concerns human beings; there are only disorders. A person can think something like that. It comes to tempt one constantly, especially when one is old and so one thinks, "Well, anyhow, I'm going to die in five years at the outside"—actually, I am thinking in terms of ten years, but it could be five. In any event, the world seems ugly, evil, and without hope. Such is the tranquil despair of an old man who will die in that despair. However, I resist, and I shall, I know, die in hope. But this hope must be well grounded.

We must try to explain why the world of today, which is horrible, is only one moment in a long historical development, that hope has always been one of the dominant forces of revolutions and insurrections, and how I still feel that hope is my conception of the future. □

Translated by ADRIENNE FOULKE

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Octavio Paz

Sartre in Our Time

Mexico City, April 17, 1980

After the initial surprise this sort of news causes, I felt a resigned melancholy at the death of Jean-Paul Sartre. I was living in Paris during those years after World War II when his glory and influence were at their height. Sartre bore his fame simply and with good humor. Despite the fact that the sanctimoniousness of many of his admirers—especially the Latin Americans, as always avid for "up-to-date" philosophies—was at once irritating and comic, his truly philosophic simplicity disarmed even the most reticent. In those years, reading him both enraged and impassioned me. One of his qualities was to arouse both rejection and assent in his readers, with equal violence. Many times, in the course of my reading, I regretted not knowing him personally, so as to tell him of my doubts and disagreements. Happenstance gave me that opportunity.

A friend, who had been sent to Paris by our Univeristy [of Mexico] to complete his studies in philosophy, told me he was in danger of losing his scholarship unless he produced in the near future a work on some philosophical theme. It occurred to me that this article could take the form of a dialogue with Sartre. We got in touch with him through some common friends and proposed the idea. He accepted, and a few days later the three of us ate together in the Pont-Royal bar. The interview-cum-dinner lasted over three hours, during which Sartre was extremely animated, speaking with intelligence, passion, and energy. He also knew how to listen, and went to the trouble of answering my questions and my timid objections. My friend never wrote the article, but that first encounter gave me the chance to see Sartre again in the same bar. After the third or fourth meeting our relationship ended: too many things separated us, and I did not seek him out again. I have touched upon our differences in parts of *Alternating Current* and *The Philanthropic Ogre*.

The topics of these conversations were those of the time: existentialism and its relationship to literature and politics. The publication in *Les Temps Modernes* of a fragment of the book on Jean Genet, which he was then writing, led us to speak about that writer and St. Teresa. This was a comparison much to his taste, since, he would say, both had effectively made the same choice: Consummate Evil for one; for the other, Consummate Good ("le Non-Etre de l'Etre et l'Etre du Non-Etre"). I was suprised that, guided only by verbalist logic, he neglected the very thing that formed the crux of his preoccupations and the foundation of his philosophical criticism—St. Teresa's subjectivity and her historical situation. In other words, the real person who was the Spanish nun, and the intellectual and affective horizon of her life, the religiosity of 16th-century Spain. For Genet, Satan and God are words signifying nebulous realities, suprasensible entities—myths or ideas. For St. Teresa these same words were spiritual and sensible realities, ideas made flesh. And it is this that distinguishes the mystical experience from all others: although the Devil is the non-Person by antonomasia and although strictly speaking God, too, is a nonperson, except in the mystery of the Incarnation, for the believer both are tangible presences, spirits in human form.

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During this conversation I made an uncomfortable discovery; Sartre had not read St. Teresa. He was talking from hearsay. Later on, in a newspaper interview, he said that he had been inspired to write *Le Diable et le bon Dieu* by Cervantes' comedy *El Rufián Dichoso* (*The Lucky Soundrel*), although he added that he had only read a plot summary of the Spanish work. This ignorance of Spanish literature is widespread and not unusual among Europeans and Americans. Edmund Wilson took pride in having read neither Cervantes, Calderón, nor Lope de Vega. Nevertheless, Sartre's confession shows that he was unacquainted with one of the supreme moments of European culture, the Spanish theater of the 16th and 17th centuries. His negligence still amazes me, since one of the great themes of the Spanish theater, origin of some of the best works of Tirso de Molina, Miramedescua, and Calderón, is precisely what concerned him all his life—the conflict between grace and freedom. In another conversation he told me of his admiration for Mallarmé. Years later, reading what he had written on that poet, I realized that once again the object of his admiration was not the poetry that Mallarmé had in fact written, but his plan for an absolute poetry, the Book he never wrote. In spite of what his philosophy preaches, Sartre preferred shadow to substance.

Our last conversation was almost entirely about politics. Commenting on the United Nations discussions of Russian concentration camps, he said, "The English and the French have no right to criticize the Russians for their camps, since they have their colonies. The colonies are really the concentration camps of the bourgeoisie." This trenchant moral judgment completely left out the specific differences—historical, social, and political—between the two systems. By equating the colonialism of the West with the repressive system of the Soviets, Sartre was waving a magic wand over the one problem that could and should interest a left-wing intellectual like himself: what was the Soviet regime really like, socially and historically? By not getting at the root of the matter, he was indirectly aiding and abetting those who wished to perpetuate the lies behind which the Soviet reality had until then been hiding. This was his profound mistake, if such an intellectual and moral flaw can be so called.

It is true, at that time imperialism was exploiting the colonial population just as the Soviet state was exploiting the prisoners in the camps. The difference lay in the fact that the colonies were not part of the bourgeois states' system of repression (no French workers were condemned to forced labor in Algeria, nor were British dissidents deported to India), whereas the Soviet people itself made up the population of the camps—peasants, workers, intellectuals, and whole strata of society (ethnic, religious, and professional). The concentration camps—that is, repression—were (and are) an integral part of the Soviet system. Moreover, during those years the colonies won their independence, while the system of the concentration camps has spread, like an infection, throughout all the countries dominated by Communist regimes. And again, is it even conceivable that liberation movements—like those that have freed the former European colonies in Asia and Africa—could be born and could develop within the concentration camps of Russia, Cuba, or Vietnam?

Sartre was not insensitive to this line of reasoning, but he was hard to convince. He thought that as long as oppression and exploitation existed in our countries, we bourgeois intellectuals had no moral right to criticize the vices of the Soviet system. When the Hungarian revolution broke out, Sartre attributed the uprising in part to Khrushchev's imprudent revelations of Stalin's crimes. He, Khrushchev, should not have made the workers lose heart.

Sartre's case is prototypical but not unique. A sort of moralizing masochism, born of impeccable principles, has for over 30 years paralyzed many intellectuals of the West and of Latin America. We were brought up in the dual heritage of Christianity and the Enlightenment; both streams of thought, the religious and the secular, at their best produced great moral critics. Our

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models have been men who, like a Las Casas or a Rousseau, had the courage to reveal and denounce the horrors and injustices of their own societies. Far be it from me to renounce this tradition; without it our societies would no longer be the internal dialogue that is the essence of true civilization, and would be transformed into the barbarous, monotonous monologue of power.

Criticism allowed Kant and Hume, Voltaire and Diderot to lay the foundations of our modern world. Their criticism was creative, as was that of their heirs in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. We have corrupted criticism; we have made it serve our hatred of ourselves and of our world. We have built with it nothing but prisons of concepts. And what is worse, in the name of criticism we have justified tyrannies. In Sartre this intellectual sickness created a myopic view of history. For him the sun of reality never shone. It is a cruel sun, but also, at certain moments, a sun of plenitude and happiness. Plenitude, happiness: two words that do not appear in his lexicon. . . . Our conversation ended abruptly. Simone de Beauvoir arrived and rather impatiently made him down his coffee and leave.

Although Sartre had made a short trip to Mexico, he hardly mentioned his experience there. I do not think he was a good traveler. He had too many opinions. He made his real voyages around himself, in the solitude of his room. Sartre's naturalness, frankness, and integrity impressed me as much as the agility of his thought and the solidity of his convictions. These last two qualities were not contradictory: he had the agility of a heavyweight prizefighter. He lacked grace, but compensated for it with a hearty, direct style. This lack of affectation was an affectation in itself, and could shift from frankness to abruptness. Nevertheless, he would welcome a stranger cordially, and one guessed that he was harder on himself than on others. He was stocky and a little clumsy; a round face with undefined features—as though the sculptor had not quite finished his task. The thick lens of his spectacles lent him an air of distance. But just to hear him was to forget his appearance. A strange thing: though Sartre wrote pages of great subtlety on the meaning of visual communication, his conversation had the opposite effect—it annulled the power of vision.

As I remember our exchanges, Sartre's moral steadfastness, his constancy, surprised me. The same themes and problems that inspired him in his youth engaged him in his maturity and his old age. He changed his mind often, and yet was faithful to himself in all those changes. I remember asking him if I was correct in supposing that the moral work he was promising to write—a project he conceived of as his great intellectual endeavor and did not succeed entirely in realizing—would ultimately have to be a philosophy of history. He shook his head doubtfully. The expression "philosophy of history" struck him as suspect, spurious, as if for him philosophy were one thing and history another. Furthermore, we already had the philosophy of Marxism, which had totally extracted the meaning of the historical evolution of our time. He was proposing to insert the real, live human being into Marxism. We are our situation: our past, our moment; at the same time we are something that cannot be reduced to these conditions, however determinative they may be. In his introduction to the journal *Les Temps Modernes* he speaks of a *total* liberation of mankind, but a few lines further on he says that the danger is that "the whole man" should disappear, "swallowed up by class." And so he was as much opposed to the ideology that reduces individuals to mere functions of class as to the ideology that conceives of classes as functions of the nation. He maintained this position all his life.

His philosophy of the "situation"—Ortega's more precise expression was "circumstance"—seemed to Sartre not a negation of the absolute but the only way to understand and realize it. In the same essay he said,

> The absolute is Descartes, the man who escaped from us because he died, who lived in his era and thought it, hour after hour, with the means he had to hand, who loved a cross-eyed girl when he was young. . . .

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> What is relative is Cartesianism, that itinerant philosophy that they parade from century to century. . . .

I am not convinced that these peremptory formulas resist even a slightly persistent analysis. Why must the "absolute" be a youthful passion for a cross-eyed girl (why cross-eyed?) and why must Descartes' philosophy be relative, as opposed to this youthful passion (and Descartes' philosophy is not exactly the same as the Cartesianism to which Sartre contemptuously alludes)? And why use *absolute,* a word drenched in theology? This despotic focus suits neither passions nor philosophies. There are passions that seek the absolute and there are philosophies of the absolute, but there are no absolute passions nor philosophies. . . . I have digressed. What I wanted to emphasize is that in this essay Sartre introduces into social and historical determinations an element of indeterminacy: the human being, mankind. And so in 1947 he had already begun his long and unfortunate dialogue with Marxism and the Marxists. What was his real purpose? To reconcile Communism with freedom. He failed, but his failure is the failure of three generations of left-wing intellectuals.

Sartre wrote philosophical treatises and political essays, books of criticism and novels, short stories and plays. Profusion is not excellence. His gifts were not those of the artist; he often gets lost in useless digressions and amplifications. His language is insistent and repetitive—he pounds the plot into the ground. He tires his reader without convincing him. If his prose is not memorable, what can we say about his novels and stories? He wrote admirable narratives but lacked the novelist's strength, the ability to create worlds, atmospheres, and characters. We can say the same of his plays; we remember the ideas of *Les Mouches* and *Huis-Clos,* not the ghosts who enunciate them. In his search for the man of flesh and blood, Sartre often ended up with a handful of abstractions. And his philosophy? He made valiant but partial contributions. His work is not a beginning but a continuation of and sometimes a commentary on the work of others. What would be left of Sartre without Heidegger?

In his essays there are many lively, dense pages, always a little overstated, powerful waves of words boiling with ideas, sarcasm, witticisms. For my taste the best of his writings is the most personal, the least "committed," those texts that are nearer confession than speculation, for instance, many pages of *Les Mots,* perhaps his best book: there words take shape, play games, return to childhood. Sartre excelled in two opposite forms: analysis and wit. He was an excellent critic and an inspired polemicist. The polemicist harmed the critic: his analyses often became accusations, as in his books on Baudelaire and Flaubert, or in his preposterous criticisms of surrealism.

Worse than the polemicist's hatchet were the moralist's rod and the professor's pointer. Sartre often used criticism like a court of law that dispenses nothing but punishments and admonitions. His *Baudelaire* is both penetrating and prejudiced; it is a chastisement, a lesson, rather than a study. Although the book on Genet errs at the opposite extreme—there are moments when it is a very Christian apology for abjection as the road to salvation—it has pages that are hard to forget. When Sartre let himself be carried away by his gift for words, the result was surprising. Though when he spoke of men he reduced them to concepts, ideas, and theses, he could turn words into living beings. A cruel paradox: he despised literature and was above all a man of letters. . . .

Sartre thought and wrote profusely and on many subjects. Despite its diversity, much of what he said, even when he was wrong, seems to me essential. By which I mean essential for *us,* his contemporaries. Sartre lived the ideas, struggles, and tragedies of our era with the intensity with which others live their private dramas. He was a consciousness and a passion. I mean that he was conscious of the passage of time and of men. He was a moralist rather than a philosopher. Not a moralist in the tradition of the Grand Siècle, interested in the de-

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scription and analysis of the soul and its passions; he was no La Rochefoucauld. I call him a moralist not for his psychological penetration but because he had the courage all his life to ask himself the only questions that really matter: What reasons do we have for living? Why and to what end are we alive? Is it worthwhile to live as we do?

We know the answers he gave to these questions: Man, surrounded by nothingness and non-sense, is of little consequence. Man is not man, he is potential man. The actualizing agent is choice: we are condemned to choose, and our pain is called freedom. We also know how far this paradox of freedom as condemnation led Sartre. Time and again he supported the tyrannies of our century because he thought that the despotism of the revolutionary caesars was only freedom's mask. Time and again he had to confess that he had been wrong: what had looked like masks were the stone faces of the Führers. In our century tyranny has worn the mask of revolution. Sartre joyfully greeted each revolutionary triumph (China, Cuba, Algeria, Vietnam), and then, always a little late, he had to admit that he had been wrong: these regimes were execrable. If he was severe in his criticism of American intervention in Vietnam and of French policy in Algeria, he was not blind to Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Cambodia. And yet, for years he stubbornly defended the U.S.S.R. and its satellites because he believed that, despite everything, these regimes embodied a socialist design, though in a corrupt form. His criticism of the West was implacable, and exudes hatred of his world and of himself; his prologue to Fanon's book [*The Wretched of the Earth*] is a fierce, impressive exercise in denigration, which is at the same time self-expiation. It is significant that when he wrote these pages he had not perceived in the liberation movements of the so-called Third World the germs of political corruption that have transformed these revolutions into dictatorships.

Why did he persist in not seeing and not hearing? Of course, I exclude the possibility of complicity or duplicity, as was true of the Aragons, the Nerudas, and so many others who were silent though they knew better. Stubbornness? Pride? The penitential Christianity of a man who has stopped believing in God but not in sin? A crazy hope that one day things would change? But how can they change if no one dares denounce them, or if "in order not to play into the hands of imperialism" the denunciation is conditional and filled with reservations and exculpatory phrases? Sartre preached the responsibility of the writer and yet, during the years when he exercised a sort of moral dominion over the whole world (except for Communist countries), his successive and contradictory "engagements" were an example of hastiness and incoherence, if not irresponsibility. The philosophy of compromise melted away in public in contradictory gestures. It is illuminating to compare Sartre's shifts with the lucid and extremely coherent work of Cioran, a spirit apparently on the fringe of our era but who has lived it and thought it profoundly and therefore silently. Sartre's ideas and attitudes justified the opposite of what he proposed: the unembarrassed and generalized irresponsibility of the left-wing intellectuals (Latin Americans above all) who for the past 20 years, in the name of revolutionary compromise, tactics, dialectics, and other nonsense have praised and covered up tyrants and butchers.

It would be ungenerous to go on with the catalogue of his obfuscations. How can we forget that they were born of his love of freedom? Perhaps its very intensity was what made this reckless love so unperceptive. Moreover, many of his mistakes were ours, the mistakes of our age. In his last years he made almost complete amends, and joined his former adversary, Raymond Aron, in the campaign to charter a ship to transport refugees from the Communist tyranny of Vietnam. He also protested against the invasion of Afghanistan, and his is one of the names heading the manifesto of French intellectuals, asking their government to join the boycott against the Moscow Olympics. The ghosts of Breton and Camus, whom he attacked viciously and unjustly, should be satisfied. . . . Sartre's excesses are one more example of

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the perverse use of the Hegelian dialectic in the 20th century. Its influence on the intellectual consciousness of Europe has been deadly. Dialectic has made us see evil as the necessary complement of good. If everything is in motion, evil is only a momentary state of goodness, momentary but necessary, and essentially good. Evil serves goodness.

Deep down, inside Sartre's personality, lay an atavistic moral foundation shaped more by the Protestantism of his family heritage than by dialectic. All through his life, as though the spiritual practices of his Huguenot ancestors echoed within him, he subjected his conscience to scrupulous examination. Nietzsche said that the great contribution of Christianity to our knowledge of the soul was the invention of self-scrutiny and its corollary, remorse, which is at one and the same time self-punishment and an exercise in introspection. Sartre's work is yet another confirmation of the accuracy of that idea. Whether he is dealing with American politics or with Flaubert's attitudes, the intellectual and moral pattern of his criticism is that of the Christian searching his conscience: it starts with an awakening, a tearing away of veils and masks, a search not for nakedness but for the hidden wound, and it ends, inexorably, in a judgment. For the religious conscience of Protestantism, to know the world is to judge it, and to judge is to condemn.

By a curious philosophical transposition, Sartre replaced the predestination and freedom of Protestant theology with psychoanalysis and Marxism. Yet, all the great themes that impassioned the thinkers of the Reformation appear in his work. At the center of his thought was the complementary opposition between the situation (predestination) and freedom; this was also the theme of the Calvinists, and it was the main point of their debate with the Jesuits. Not even God is lacking: the Situation (History) takes on His functions if not His features and His essence. But Sartre's Situation is a divinity that has no face, because it has all faces: it is an abstract divinity. Unlike the Christian God, it is not humanized, nor is it the accomplice of our destiny. We are its accomplices and it is realized in us. From Christianity Sartre inherited not transcendence, the affirmation of another reality and another world, but the rejection of this world and abhorrence for our earthly reality. And so, at the root of his analyses, protests, and insults of bourgeois society, the old vindictive voice of Christianity sounds again. The real name of his criticism is remorse. By accusing his class and his world, Sartre is accusing himself with the violence of a penitent.

It is remarkable that the two French writers who during the 20th century have had the deepest influence—on moral thought, not on literature—have been André Gide and Jean-Paul Sartre. Two Protestants rebelling against their Protestantism, their families, their class, and the moral values of their class. Two immoral moralists. Gide rebelled in the name of the senses and the imagination; he wanted to free the passions chained up inside men rather than men themselves. Communism disappointed him because he saw that it replaced the prison of Christian morality with a more total, more concrete prison. Gide was a moralist but also an aesthete, and in his work moral criticism went hand in hand with the cult of the beautiful. On his lips the word "pleasure" has both a subversive and a voluptuous taste. More evangelical and radical, Sartre scorned art and literature with the furor of a Father of the Church. In a moment of desperation he said, "Hell is other people." A terrible phrase because other people are our horizon, the world of men. This, no doubt, is why he later maintained that the liberation of the individual must come about through collective liberation. Beginning with the singular "I," his works move out to embrace the plural "us." Perhaps he forgot that this first-person plural is a collective "you"; to love others we must first love the other, our neighbor. We moderns need to rediscover the singular "you."

In *Les Mouches*, one of his first works, there is a phrase that has been quoted many times, but is worth repeating: "Life begins on the other side of despair." Except that

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what lies on the other side of despair is not life but the old Christian virtue we call hope. The first time the word "hope" appears explicitly on Sartre's lips is in the preceding interview, which first appeared in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a short time before his death. It was his last piece. A disjointed, moving text. . . . In it, with a self-assurance that some have found disconcerting and others simply deplorable, he declares that his pessimism was a tribute to the fashion of the times. A curious assertion. The whole interview is shot through with a vision of the world that is at times disillusioned, most of the time acutely pessimistic. In the course of his conversation with his young disciple, Sartre shows a stoical and admirable resignation in the face of his approaching death. This attitude is the more courageous because it stands out against a black background: Sartre confesses that his work is left unfinished, that his political efforts were defeated, and that the world he is leaving behind is gloomier than the world he was born into. This is why his quiet hope truly impressed me: despite the disasters of our era, some day men will reconquer fraternity (or will conquer it for the first time). On the other hand, I was surprised by his saying that Judaism, the least universal of the three monotheisms, is the origin and foundation of this hope. Judaism is a closed fraternity. Why was he once again deaf to the voice of his tradition?

The dream of universal brotherhood—more emphatically, the enlightened certainty that this is the state to which all mankind is naturally and supernaturally predestined if we can recover our original innocence—appears in primitive Christianity. It reappears among the Gnostics of the third and fourth centuries and in the millenary movements that have periodically affected the West, from the Middle Ages to the Reformation. But this is an insignificant cavil. It is cause for rejoicing that at the end of his life, without denying his atheism, resigned to his death, Sartre recovered the best and purest part of our religious tradition—the vision of a world of men and women reconciled, transparent one to another because there is no longer anything to hide nor to fear, naked once again as at the beginning. The loss and reconquest of innocence was the theme of the poet John Milton, another great Protestant, also enmeshed in the struggles of his century, whom an excessive love of freedom caused to justify the tyrant Cromwell. In the last canto of *Paradise Lost* he describes the slow, painful journey of Adam and Eve—and with them of all of us, their children—toward the realm of innocence:

> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
> They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

As I reread these pages, I thought once more about the man that inspired them. Then I felt the temptation to paraphrase him—itself an act of homage and recognition—by writing in his memory: freedom is other people. □

Translated by RACHEL PHILLIPS BELASH

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Lionel Abel

Our First Serious Fascist?

Lyndon LaRouche, whatever one thinks of his politics, has at least brought a modicum of excitement to the political scene. John Anderson, who recently gained such wide support, is only new as a candidate for the presidency; his opinions, except for the fact of being held by a Republican, are in no sense unusual. Now LaRouche is something else again. In a few television appearances (as a candidate for the presidency in 1976, and once again this year, in the New Hampshire Democratic primary), he has been able to startle, disconcert, and at times even frighten liberal audiences in a way that recalls the effect Malcolm X had during the '60s. Part of Malcolm's appeal came, of course, from his electric rhetoric of aggression, and he was helped, too, during his flights of invective, by the guilt feelings toward blacks of those who heard him. LaRouche has nothing of this sort going for him. And he is not striking in appearance on the television screen as Malcolm was, with his reddish hair, and cream of brown complexion. LaRouche, with strong features, is all the same reassuringly plain; he is not exceptionally handsome, not intriguingly homely. Yet, like Malcolm's, his effect on audiences has been little short of sensational. Speaking clearly, rapidly, and ever so grammatically, Mr. LaRouche at first gave the impression of an academic, in politics on a sabbatical, but after one had heard him out, one saw that he is a firebrand. What he has to say is often as startling as the dramatic posturings and mannerisms of Malcolm X.

I shall come to his opinions in a moment. But let me first add just one further touch to the picture I have been composing of him. LaRouche is at ease in handling ideas and is clearly a master of the concepts he has chosen to discuss. But behind his often measured words one senses something further, a will to dominate, of the kind one felt behind Malcolm X's wildest bursts of rhetoric. Lyndon LaRouche has, and I would suggest to a very high degree, a quality that was also in Malcolm X, it is the very quality Machiavelli thought most essential for political success, i.e., *virtu*, that toughness of spirit without which dedication to the role of political leadership must, with the passage of time, become unreal. No doubt it is this quality in the man that has attracted many of his followers. If I am right about this, if LaRouche does indeed possess *virtu*, and to the extent I suggest, then it would be unwise for us to underestimate him.

Many of LaRouche's followers are young, and not a few of them are academics, some well trained in the sciences. They all seem somewhat odd, and odd in ways that are similar, and it might be, in fact it is no doubt the case, that LaRouche has charisma for oddballs of a certain kind. All the same, this is not sufficient to explain his appeal for those in his group who cannot be so characterized. (Let me note here that the women he has attracted to him do not seem to be as odd as the men, but this perhaps tells as much about me as about his followers.) Here is the question though I would like to be able to answer: What is LaRouche's appeal to the young academics in his group who could pursue careers in economics, chemistry, political science, art history, or physics? No doubt it lies in the fact that he is himself highly intellectual and can talk to them in the difficult language games they have been trained to play. If one looks into his recent book, *Basic Economics for Conservative Democrats*, one finds there quite brilliant formulations about "capital formation" and "energy density" and, on the question of nuclear energy, for example, he advances arguments disposing of the claims made by Barry Commoner and Ralph Nader, which show in the clearest way what is self-serving and fallacious in their positions. Certainly no other candidate for president—and I include John Anderson—would be capable of analyzing intellectual-political problems with that much assurance and verve.

All the same, there is still much to be explained, for LaRouche does not have a general theory founding the political activity he instigates, and one would expect intellectually trained people, especially since Marxism was taken up by the

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intellectuals—and this happened a good many years ago—to insist on a founding theory of some kind. And LaRouche, as far as I can see, has none. Though he comes from the Trotskyist movement, which he left in 1960, LaRouche does not base himself on a Marxist analysis of capitalism, or of its present stage, or even on those reformulations of Marxism we find in *Critical Theory*, or in the humanist versions of Marxism that have come from Eastern Europe. LaRouche has no theory, but he does have ideas, and he makes judgments of a violence that would, in fact, only be justified if based upon some theory. These violent judgments do seem to stimulate his disciples.

Once again, Why do people follow him? Here, I think, we have to take a look at recent history. The New Left, which so dominated our political scene during the Vietnam War years, left as its legacy the notion that in the struggle against the villains of our time—the New Left's villains were, first of all, Johnson and Humphrey, and afterward Nixon and Kissinger—no theory was necessary. (If these men were indeed villains, then the reasons for fighting them were perfectly clear, and where was the need for a justifying theory?) And the rather talented Regis Debray told us, too, that theory was quite unnecessary; he pointed to Castro in the Sierra Maestra, reduced to some twelve followers and with no theory to explain his failure at that point. And still without a theory, Fidel went on to success in Havana. Now LaRouche and his followers are in their own way guerrillas. But I think of them as guerrillas in quite a special sense of the term. I think they believe that by uncorrelated, but highly aggressive, verbal attacks on whoever is politically conspicuous at the moment—it might be Jane Fonda or Ted Kennedy, Begin or President Carter—they can increase the number of their followers and add to their political clout.

Once again about their appeal to the young: membership in the LaRouche group affords the young intellectuals in it an opportunity to show their mental superiority to representatives of the regular parties. In the various local elections held throughout the country, the LaRouche group put up candidates for mayor, senator, governor, and the positions open on the various school boards. And generally speaking the LaRouche candidates for these positions exhibit over the television screens, which are thus available to them, a superiority to the candidates of the established parties similar to the superiority LaRouche himself has shown over the Democratic and Republican candidates for the presidency. There is great cunning in this use of the young and talented by Mr. LaRouche, and it has served to staff his ranks with ingenious, intellectually lively, and well-informed partisans of his strange positions.

All of this is still insufficient to explain LaRouche's hold on his disciples, especially in view of the fact that LaRouche himself has changed his judgments of the United States' foreign and domestic policies over and over again in the course of a few years' time. It may be asked, has not President Carter given an exhibition of hesitancy, drift, and incapacity to hold to a decision on almost all serious questions, and yet kept his hold on his party? No doubt, but President Carter is supported by those Democrats who continue to follow him as the man they elected president and as the titular head of their party; on the other hand, even those who support President Carter regard him as indecisive and lacking in resolution. They simply prefer him to other possible leaders, whom they find even less attractive. LaRouche, for all his changes of position, never gives the impression of being hesitant or indecisive. He is always violently to the point, drastic in his judgments, forceful in invective. He never accuses himself of past error, as President Carter sometimes does; he accuses others, and no doubt regards the rhetoric of accusation as fundamental to political life, as an art form in which it is important to excel.

Moreover, we are living in a very strange period. Many people, and most particularly those who have been trained to think exactly, have become aware that before the problems that face us, almost everyone is beyond his depth. The solutions that only a few years ago were so readily recited by the young and politically inexperienced are now rejected almost out of hand by those who consider them with any care. What are the real causes of inflation? How can it be brought down? A danger to any democratic system, inflation rises through the very programs supported by democrats. Is detente really possible without endangering the nation's future? No one wants the cold war back again, but clearly we did better under the cold war in our competition with the Soviets than we have done under detente. And how are we to deal with the Soviet Union, and how with the nations of the Third World? All of these problems have been responded to differently within recent years, and we no longer feel that there is any particular viewpoint especially qualified to address them.

And there is something else besides, which is brought to mind by the fact that among Mr. LaRouche's supporters there are some who have gone all the way with him from the socialist and communist principles they held as former

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Trotskyists. How could people with that background have come all the way around to what has been called by Mr. Dennis King in *Our Town* a "neo-Nazi" outlook? Here I am struck by a historical analogy. In the middle of the 18th century, Jacob Frank brought his Eastern European (mainly Polish) Jewish followers into the Catholic Church and, what is more, persuaded them to offer testimony in support of the atrocious blood libel against Jews that the Jewish communities of the period found so threatening. Now Gershom Scholem explains Jacob Frank as a mixture of messianic yearnings and the will to power. Both of these elements, to be sure, are evident in LaRouche. But there is something else to support the comparison. The crisis in Jewish life that made a leader like Jacob Frank possible in the 18th century came from the torment of the Diaspora, the long exile, rendered especially acute by the expulsion in 1492 of the Jews from Spain. Now there are many today who feel themselves part of a new Diaspora, a Diaspora from the idea of socialism, if not from the ideals it was supposed to realize, and members of this Diaspora very well may find something attractive in the positions of LaRouche. . . .

In a situation of crisis, people want a leader who can (1) enlighten them and (2) is ready to do so. I separate the two traits, for some of our prominent political figures, perhaps the best of them, have the second capability but seem to be lacking in the first. For instance John Anderson, who has attracted the youth and the intellectuals—he is the first Republican to do so in my memory—has caught the fancy of so many people, I think, because of the fact that he so clearly has the second trait I spoke of. He really wants to explain things to us, the economy and how we are to again attain some control of it, and he is precise and careful in all his statements about it. And in this carefulness and precision he makes people feel that he does really want to bring some clarity into the discussion of the issues, something no one can feel about Senator Kennedy, who polemicizes every issue that he deals with, and in any case seems incapable of explaining simple matters, let alone complicated ones. As for President Carter, no one would ever accuse him of having the passion to explain anything. By now we have all come to suspect, or ought to suspect, that even if he did come to understand some problem, and were able to clarify us on it, he would only do so if there were some political advantage to be gained by this, and a momentary advantage at that. Mr. John Anderson we believe would explain any problem he clearly understood, no matter what the political consequences, and this has made many people love him. But there are definite limits to John Anderson's understanding, especially in foreign affairs. He has not convinced this observer, at least, that he has understood what has happened in Iran, why the Soviet armies are in Afghanistan, the extent of Soviet penetration into Africa and Asia, the Soviet use of a vassal like Fidel Castro, and any number of pertinent problems affecting our relations with the rest of the world. If John Anderson *did* understand these matters, I am sure he would be glad to enlighten us about them; but he seems to have an insensitiveness to problems that arise beyond our nation's borders.

LaRouche has no such intellectual limitedness. He is alert to political and economic developments in all parts of the globe, and he knows Asian as well as European history. I think he is excellently equipped to clarify a great many matters of concern to all of us, and his ability to do this I take to be one reason for his standing as a leader. But the second trait essential to a political leader—at least in a democratic society—the desire to explain and clarify, I find him completely lacking in. He gives no explanation whatever for his most extravagant assertions, and his clear rhetoric never really resolves any question. He intrigues us, stimulates us, but always ends with judgments at times beyond our comprehension, and for which he gives no evidence. For example, How might we end inflation? By going back to the gold standard, LaRouche tells us. Others have advocated this course, and indicated that it could be of benefit to the economy, but no one has made the claims for going back on the gold standard that Mr. LaRouche makes. He tells us that once we're on the gold standard, inflation will disappear, unemployment cease, the prime rate of interest come down, and the whole economy of the country revert to the state it enjoyed during the Eisenhower regime. How could all this result from our going back on the gold standard?

Let us take another matter. One of Mr. LaRouche's favorite whipping boys is Henry Kissinger, whom he accuses of being an agent of the British. Now why should Mr. Kissinger have become an agent of the British? To what end, other than to enable Mr. LaRouche to call him that? If Henry Kissinger is indeed an agent of British policy in the United States, there would have to be some reason for this, *a suffiçient reason*, as Leibnitz put it—Leibnitz is one of the heroes of the LaRouchists, who have even referred to him as *the last fully potent intellectual*—but on this point Mr. LaRouche is altogether insufficient. He gives *no*

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reason for the policy of subservience to Britain, which he claims Mr. Kissinger took up and still perseveres in. LaRouche claims also that Menahem Begin, the prime minister of Israel, is an agent of the British. What is more, the PLO terrorists, who have attacked women and children in Israel, are also, LaRouche claims, agents of the British. And to cap all these monstrous and undocumented assertions, he asserts as well that the Ayatollah Khomeini, who seems so full of hatred for Israel and for the West, worked with Israeli intelligence agents to overthrow the Shah.

I think it can be said fairly that while Mr. LaRouche wants to show us his own lucidity, he has no wish to contribute to ours. Why should he want us to be lucid? When we examine what he has to say on important matters, we find him to be an unconscionable distorter of fact. Such distortion is regularly relied on by the group. For LaRouche seems to have borrowed the Nazi method of falsification, together with the Nazi attack on the activities of the Jews. "The B'nai B'rith," he writes, ". . . was established in the United States in 1843 as a principal arm of British Secret Intelligence, then working to destroy the United States from within, as part of the operation culminating in the U.S. Civil War of the 1860's." Thus Jewish political activity in this country is related by him to efforts to destroy us in the interests of the British. LaRouche goes on:

> All of the so-called Zionist organizations in the United States and Canada are offshoots of the B'nai B'rith, which has been continuously, since its founding, a special political-intelligence arm of London-centered financial interests linked commonly to the Montefiores and the Rothchilds. It was the American Jesuits and the B'nai B'rith which founded the racist, terrorist organization, the Ku Klux Klan, in 1867; it is the B'nai B'rith which has been repeatedly discovered to exert top-down control within Klan organizations to the present date.

Having noted that the Klan is racist and terrorist, LaRouche totally obscures the fact that it was, and is, anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic. Why should Jews and Jesuits have been interested in creating an organization that used violence against them? What reason would have been sufficient to persuade them that anything like that was in their interest? On this point, Mr. LaRouche, the admirer of Leibnitz, is discreetly silent.

A scholar of my acquaintance once pointed out in conversation the different methods employed by Spengler and Toynbee in dealing with facts that did not fit their theories. Spengler, he said, goose-stepped over them; Toynbee squeezed them gently but firmly, until they fitted his hypotheses. In addition to his outright lying, both these methods are employed by LaRouche. Evidently he has a great distaste for the British—he even goes so far as to call the physics of Newton and Maxwell "incompetent" (which is not so unlike the Nazi rejection of Einstein's physics as "Jewish").

Yet, LaRouche is not unready to follow the empiricist Toynbee's way of dealing with recalcitrant facts. But first let us watch LaRouche striding across facts *à la* Spengler. Hitler, he tells us, ". . . was originally a creation of the right wing of British intelligence. . . ." Having established (to his satisfaction) the British responsibility for Hitler, he then says: "Beginning in 1939, certain problems intruded in the relationship between the Hitler regime and its British patrons. . . ." What problems? we may ask. The problems, to be sure, occasioned by Hitler's pact with Stalin, whose responsibility for the War in 1939, LaRouche, aiming at British responsibility, wants to ignore: and here is Mr. LaRouche, like Toynbee, gently but firmly putting pressure on the facts. That Khomeini, he tells us, like his father before him, ". . . is an agent of the British SIS, does not, of course, signify that [he] . . . considers himself in his own mind 'merely' a tool of the British SIS." Here LaRouche concedes that Khomeini may actually not consider himself to be a tool of British policy. He may even imagine himself to have thought up his own goals! To be sure, there is not a scrap of evidence to indicate that Khomeini was a creation of the British. There was not even a rumor to this effect. There is a rumor, though, that in the '50s he worked for the KGB. In any case, while Mr. LaRouche concedes a certain independence to Hitler and to Khomeini, he makes no such concession to the Jews. They are commonly seen by him to be agents of British policy, even though it was the Jews in Palestine who put an end to Britain's role of empire there.

Sometimes LaRouche writes as if the agents of British policy in the United States—generally Jewish intellectuals like Walter Lippmann or Henry Kissinger—were actually recruited by the British for this purpose. But there are times when he suggests that they became agents of the British in a different sense, i.e., they adopted a way of thinking that is peculiar to the British. What is this way of thinking? Possibly he means empiricism. And this can be called British, though as Professor MacIntyre has pointed out, it cannot be called English, for Berkeley, who was Irish, and Hume, who was a Scot, made the greatest contributions to this mode of thought. Against the British way of thinking, LaRouche counterposes what he calls neo-Platonism, from which, according to him,

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comes all that is acceptable in Marx and Lenin. Probably he means here the readiness to accept intellectual constructions without any evidence for them, constructions of a kind Anglo-American thinkers find objectionable. In any case, LaRouche sometimes writes as if the British had managed to suborn American Jewish intellectuals into serving their purposes, and sometimes as if the British way of thinking, like the God of Malebranche's *occasionalism*, managed to enter creatively into the thoughts of persons who were not British, but determined by British thought, worked for British purposes. Believe it or not, this is what he thinks went into the formation of the Ku Klux Klan.

LaRouche and his followers want power. The question is: How do they propose to get it? The LaRouche group is not, and does not plan to be, the elite center of a mass movement, as were other authoritarian political tendencies of the right and the left of this century. Nor do they propose to get power by the vote, even though they put up candidates in local and national elections. Moreover, LaRouche himself is scornful of democracy and of democratic processes. He does not want to be too explicit on this point, for he was a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. Yet these are his opinions of "democracy" and "democrats" as expressed in his recent book, *Will the Soviets Rule During the 1980's?*:

> . . . "democracy" alienates the individual from efficient consciousness of those policies and policy issues which bear directly on the well-being of society as a whole. The "democrat" is concerned only with his slice of the total pie, not whether the pie is increasing or shrinking. The "democrat" is an anti-social, destructive person *in principle*. . . . He is obsessively blind to the fact that what affects society as a whole in an adverse way must ultimately be destructive to his own true interests.

No totalitarian to my knowledge has better expressed what is after all the standard totalitarian attack on the weakness of democratic politics. LaRouche has, of course, the right to associate Lenin with his own antidemocratic concepts. Whether he has the right to do this with Marx, too, is much less certain, but in any case here is his judgment of Marx and of Marx's "scientific socialism": "Marx established the practice—which he termed 'scientific socialism'—through which socialism was saved, in large part, from the fascist-like gutter-life of a 'democratic,' neo-Jacobin rabble." That a man who could write in this vein could also be a candidate for president on the Democratic party ticket tells us something about the inconsequence and oddness of political rules today. If some Democratic party leaders think that because LaRouche uses the word *fascist* pejoratively at times, he cannot be pursuing purposes of a fascist sort, I suggest they look into Ignazio Silone's *The School for Dictators*, in which the Italian socialist, as far back as 1938, predicted that fascism could come to power in America in the form of antifascism.

My question remains, if not by setting the masses in motion, and if not by gaining a victory at the polls, on what does LaRouche count to arrive at power? I take it from his book, *Will the Soviets Rule During the 1980's?*, that he looks forward in the next few years to a violent confrontation of the United States with the U.S.S.R. bringing with it the threat of thermonuclear war. In this situation, LaRouche and his followers are prepared to come forward with proposals to end the crisis, and arrange a durable truce with the Soviet government. To be entrusted with any such proposals by the monied interests of the United States and those who manage its fortunes, LaRouche and his followers would have to have shown they believe in an identity of interest between the economy administered by the rulers of Russia and that of American capitalism. Now the very expensive monthly, *Executive Intelligence Review* (priced at $10 per copy) gotten out by the LaRouchists and distributed to the top executive offices of our financiers and industrialists, is directed precisely to convincing our leading capitalists that capitalism, as LaRouche understands it, is still *historically progressive*, that Marx and Lenin were mistaken insofar as they thought capitalism was necessarily a brake on productivity, and finally, that there was a line in Lenin's thinking with which American capitalists could solidarize themselves, seeing that according to this line of thought, war between the United States and the Soviets is not inevitable, nor is victory of one system over the other required by either.

LaRouche has a model for his proposed U.S.-Soviet agreement in the interest of peace between the two powers: the Soviet-German Treaty of Rapallo, signed by Chicherin and Rathenau in 1922. This treaty provided the Germans with the opportunity to experiment with prototypes of new military weapons on Russian soil, something prohibited on German soil by the Versailles treaty. In return for this, the Red Army received from the Wehrmacht the weapons it tried out: these remained in Russian hands. Let us ask now how this Rapallo agreement could apply to American-Soviet relations during the '80s.

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Note first of all that Germany signed the Rapallo agreement with the Soviet Union in order to escape from the constraints of the Treaty of Versailles, which finalized the military defeat of the German empire in the First World War. Now the United States was, with the Soviet Union, one of the victors in the Second World War, and there is no Versailles Treaty limiting us economically or militarily. What need would we have for a new arrangement with the Soviets modeled on the Rapallo treaty?

Here we must take another look backward. At the outset of the cold war, Beuve-Mery, a founder and editor of the famous French daily *Le Monde*, published a front-page article that has been decisive for American and French opinion ever since. He called in his piece for a planned political retreat by the Western powers, noting that the political attacks by the West on communism had not served the West well. Neither the *Cordon Sanitaire* of the French Third Republic nor the *Drang nach Osten* of Hitler had been profitable to the West. Both had resulted in the continued advance of communism. The new doctrine of planned retreat became the official doctrine of all Western states, including the United States, that is, except for periods of recalcitrance—as in the Cuban missile crisis, which alienated European opinion, and in the Vietnam War, during which we alienated world opinion. But the doctrine of planned retreat, supported by Walter Lippman in 1950, has become American majority opinion. It was the basis of Kissinger's diplomatic operations, and has by now even convinced George Kennan, who today argues against his own prior held doctrine of containment.

I want to make just one point against this officially held doctrine. Since the term *retreat* is based on military theorizing, I think it not unfair to note that retreat, according to the best military thought, is the most difficult operation to bring off successfully. Orderly retreat requires the greatest discipline of an army so engaged and, if disorderly, can very easily become a rout. We saw such a rout develop in Vietnam when the armies of General Thieu, which had done fairly well up to that point, tried to retreat from advanced positions, and in the disorder that followed were demolished. Can we apply this notion politically? Can we say that the political retreat of the United States before the advance of Communist power is now threatening to become a rout?

It is on the expectation that some such rout is imminent that LaRouche believes he can attain political importance. A politically defeated United States might sign a new agreement with the Soviet Union, perhaps modeled on the treaty of Rapallo; we would guarantee the Russians, for instance, the computers and the grain they want and also American neutrality in the event of a Soviet attack on China; in return for these concessions, we might avoid war.

Note that the foreign-policy positions held by LaRouche tally point for point with Soviet views. Both the LaRouchists and the Russians are pro-Arab, anti-Chinese, and anti-Zionist to the point of anti-Semitism. Now I will not say that the Soviet Union is especially anti-British, and LaRouche *is*, but the historical model for close relations between an American leader and a Russian Communist party chief may have been set at Teheran and Yalta, where we saw the Democratic party leader, President Roosevelt, joining with Stalin in attacks against Winston Churchill, whom Roosevelt charged with "imperialism." So there is a historical basis for LaRouche's attack on the British, though the manner in which he has carried out that attack is irrational in the extreme.

Assuming I am right about their expectations, what are the chances of success for LaRouche and his followers? Their hopes are based on this prediction: American policies are certain to fail. So now we must ask: What are the chances of failure for this country during the '80s? Here, while not wanting to be pessimistic, it is difficult not to be. Look at the facts. We are paying out some $90 billion a year to the Arab countries for petroleum, and we shall pay out much more than that during the next five years. No rational energy policies have yet been presented to the American people. The proposed policy of conservation, which would cut our consumption of oil, involves, first of all, a major change in the American way of life, something immensely difficult to achieve without the use of force; and it would decrease American productivity. This at a time when the people are demanding more services and jobs. Militarily, our defenses are down. We are being outspent—and outmatched—by the Russians, in conventional forces, and also in nuclear weapons. We no longer have a civilian army, and no political figure on the horizon seems able to get the young men of this country to make ready to defend it. We cannot have both guns and butter, as President Johnson once said we could, and those who insist that what we most need is more butter are conceding to the Russians the greater number of guns. Our so-called allies have not stood with us in the Iranian and Afghanistan crises. Of the 150-odd nations that make up the United Nations organization, only some 17, according to Andrew Young, can be

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counted on now to support American policies. I will not say that our retreat before the Communist push has yet become a rout. It is threatening, though, to become one.

So LaRouche and his followers have some prospects. And the lack of any foundation for LaRouche's politics in some theory of political economy is not, I think, a real obstacle to the development of his movement. And one other thing LaRouche has going for him. He is sensitive to the atmosphere of this epoch, to all in it that we probably cannot deal with rationally. This is a time, not of assassins—though there are plenty of such around—but of grim scandals, of odd forms of violence (violence is losing its capacity to thrill us, and now has to be accompanied by oddness to affect us). Not only do murders multiply, we hear also of forced famines, deportations, beheadings, flagellated corpses. And in the moral depression that these accumulated horrors cannot fail to occasion, the oddball accusations and violent rhetoric of LaRouche and his followers will seem to many entirely appropriate. How many of LaRouche's people really think Kissinger an agent of the British (mind you, at one time, of the British Labour party), that David Hume was a creature of the British Intelligence service, Ernest Nagel a tool of the CIA, that the Reverend Jesse Jackson is a "poverty pimp"? These accusations are, of course, not believed. They are not really disbelieved either; they are enjoyed. And that is their value to LaRouche. They are enjoyed, like the pornography that surrounds us, and to which the notions of the true and the false do not apply either, for it is intended to take us into an atmosphere where notions of that sort are just irrelevant. □

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J. L. Talmon

"The Homeland Is in Danger"

An Open Letter to Menahem Begin

Last spring the distinguished Israeli historian Jacob Talmon published in the newspaper Haaretz *an "Open Letter to Prime Minister Menahem Begin," criticizing the policies of the government with respect to settlements in the West Bank, expansionist and chauvinistic tendencies, etc. This "Open Letter" attracted attention in Israel because of its fundamental character and because its author could not be accused of narrow partisan concerns. We decided to translate the letter for American readers and gained Professor Talmon's consent. He received the first half of the translation and checked it personally but, alas, the heart condition from which he had suffered for some years became acute and he could not check the second half. Professor Talmon died this summer. His friend Abba Eban has kindly gone over the English version, which follows the original Hebrew text except for the omission of some opening reflections on the role of the historian and a few details local to the Israeli scene.*—Eds.

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

"He hoped that it would bring forth grapes, but it brought forth sour grapes." It is now 33 years after the UN General Assembly's vote to establish a Jewish state and 32 years after the young state's soldiers, in the War of Independence, repulsed the Arab armies that threatened its existence. And it is now 14 years since our unprecedented victory in the Six-Day War, and two years after the historic breakthrough of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. Yet, today we see that the State of Israel is the "Jew among the nations"—isolated, an outcast without legitimacy in the eyes of its enemies, and a nuisance to its friends: its people divided over the all-decisive existential question, its economy on the brink of ruin. . . .

It seems that the rule of law and order has collapsed and that the government is too feeble and cowardly to implement its own decisions or to withstand the pressures of various interest groups. The government encourages the growth of extraparliamentary groups who defy the state and seek to impose their will upon it by force, bringing the dream of a renewed Jewish statehood to derision. We witness with horror a massive emigration of our nation's citizens, among them many *sabras* [native Israelis]. We are also witnessing the heart-breaking spectacle of the Russian "drop-outs"—redeemed from bondage with help secured from the largest superpower—immigrants who seemed to symbolize a miraculous resurrection of the dead. Among the Arab population, there are signs of an organized rebellion instead of the reconciliation envisaged on the basis of the autonomy plan, which was to supplement our treaty with the largest Arab nation. Hardly less alarming is the rampant assimilation of Jews in the Diaspora, only one generation after the Holocaust. What has produced this deterioration? Our task here is not to examine its immediate causes, but to try to understand its structural foundations.

Between the two world wars, the term "lost generation" was widely used in countries that had fought in the First World War. The term referred to the millions of young men who had fallen in the war, but especially to those who

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came from the elite, whose casualties—because of the unconventional and destructive method of fighting—were disproportionately high. A great many graduates of Oxford and Cambridge were lost in that bloodbath—and so were many of their equivalents in other nations.

One survivor, former English Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, devotes many heart-rending pages in his memoirs to express his sense of being one of the few survivors out of a large and closely knit fellowship. Contemporaries and historians of the 1920s and 1930s who seek to explain the poor quality and lack of imagination of politicians, the cowardly policy of appeasement, and the inability to halt the great economic crisis attribute all this to the absence of the lost generation.

But this catastrophe was nothing compared to the Holocaust that befell our people during the Second World War, resulting in the elimination of Jewish civilization from Europe. Those who were born and educated there before that catastrophe find it impossible to imagine the Jewish streets of the East and Central European cities that were destroyed, the silence of the *shtetlaçh* of the Pale of Settlement, never again to be broken by the sound of prayers coming from the *Bet Midrash* and the *hadarim*. . . . Silenced are the youth of the Hashomer Hatzair and the Betar who once sat around campfires that are now extinguished. Silenced are the prayers of lamentation, the women's "Don't cast us away when we have become old, when our strength has left us, do not abandon us," during the Days of Awe. Gone forever are the street debates between Zionists and Marxists. Gone are the Jewish girls who once greeted the coming of spring on the eve of Passover. Their strong will to live and their faith in the coming national and social revival were destroyed by suffering, humiliation, endless horror, and, finally, death.

My reader will forgive me for being so cruel as to commit to paper what many know but cannot bring themselves to utter: the melancholy truth that the Zionist national liberation movement achieved its goal at the very moment that it lost its standard-bearers. The winds around Auschwitz and Treblinka carry away the ashes of two million potential citizens of the State of Israel, people imbued with intense and genuine Zionist sentiment and the firmest Jewish roots. We shall never be able to replace them.

Yet, the state's first years counterbalanced some of this loss. They witnessed a great explosion of Jewish energy, intelligence, vigilant tension, and feverish activity. We all were summoned to build new foundations, and to absorb hundreds of thousands of immigrants. But the loss was felt later—once the first exuberance began to subside—about two or three years before the Six-Day War.

The very important result of the Six-Day War victory was that it appeared to many as a compensation for the martyrdom of the Holocaust, as a sign that the nation had heroically overcome its tragedy. Indeed, for many, this victory was a testimony to the great change that had taken place in our people—a people that only yesterday had been led like sheep to the slaughter and was now conquering empires.

Many among the Orthodox had difficulty accepting the Holocaust within the scheme of Providence and Jewish history, for they could not see the death of more than a million innocent Jewish children as punishment for sins of the whole Jewish people. What kind of sin would justify such punishment? They did not like to speak or think about the Holocaust. I remember Zalman Aranne's impassioned cry to the Orthodox representatives in the Knesset: "I will never forgive you for not having produced a second Book of Lamentations after the Holocaust!" After the Six-Day War, therefore, the Orthodox were much relieved, for now they could argue that the Holocaust had been the "birth pangs of the Messiah," that the Six-Day War victory was the Beginning of Redemption, and the conquest of the territories the finger of God at work—all proof that the vision of renewal and God's promises were being fulfilled.

The non-Orthodox nationalists soon caught this fever. A while ago, our Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir gave a perfect demonstration of this mentality when he said

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that our generation was not "entitled" to give up Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip—implying that these territories were the heritage of all generations of Jews, past, present, and future. Our generation, singled out to be the trustee of this heritage, does not have the "right" to let these sacred lands slip out of our hands.

Is this an eternal belief that will never falter or waiver? Is it loyalty to an ideal vision that no enemy, no suffering, no catastrophe will ever overcome? Or is this merely the manifestation of a classically Jewish characteristic, which the Jews may have bequeathed to other monotheistic religions—namely the need to subordinate oneself to an idea, to a vision of perfection, to an ascetic and ritualistic way of life—instead of treating life as it really is, as did the Greeks, for example, who perceived reality as a challenge and sought to extract from life and nature all the possibilities inherent in them, in order to expand the mind and give pleasure to both body and soul? In short, is it a compulsive drive that makes us deny our essential human nature? Or is this perhaps the sign of a tragic inability to live with the fact of the Holocaust and the reality it has left us with? Is it our inability to adjust to them and, consequently, a detachment from what Freud called "the reality principle"? Is it an escape into a world of mythological thought patterns and emotions whose classic example may be found in Sabbatianism? What is the meaning of that widespread determination to return to where we were in 1939, and to go from there to the farthest reaches of our emotion, as if the ghastly bloodletting had never taken place and Jewish reality and global realities had remained unchanged?

The extent of our Six-Day War victory encouraged this trend. It made us forget that, in Nietzsche's words, "there are victories that are harder to bear than defeats," and that victory in battle is by no means proof of true and enduring strength, unless it is supported by other components, such as an adequate economic infrastructure, a homogeneous population, appropriate geopolitical factors, favorable world opinion, a network of alliances, political experience, and more. For commitments or aspirations that exceed one's objective ability to carry them out are a trap. Pursuing policies that harm the vital interests of other important states—flying in the face of accepted values, of an age—give rise to an opposition that will undercut such political initiatives.

I have never doubted that we reached a turning point when the government of Israel in the summer or fall of 1967 (right after the Six-Day War) abandoned its declared policy that Israel has no territorial claims and is willing to return all occupied lands in exchange for peace. I regard this disavowal as a fatal error, a denial of the UN resolution on partition arrived at 20 years before that—and of the principle of partition itself. I believe this disavowal reopened the Israeli-Arab conflict, after the family of nations had recognized the solution that was reached as a stable and accepted fact of political life, despite the friction, the incidents of terror, and the general bloodletting. This new policy was a grievous error, and it had no chance of success.

There are some who argue that the Khartoum resolutions closed all the doors to peace. I am not an expert in these matters, but people whose opinion I respect claim that close inspection of these resolutions reveals more flexibility than was generally perceived. It is reasonable to suspect that there were those in the Israeli leadership and public who were relieved when the Khartoum conference created this impression, and when the "telephone call" from Hussein never came. I do not believe that the National Unity government and the Labor Alignment had a Machiavellian determination not to budge and not to give up one inch of captured territory. The majority, in fact, recoiled from the idea of total annexation. Yet, at the same time, it was unable to relinquish the territories for Zionist, political, and strategic reasons. There was also the evidence that our military superiority was unshakable, that the PLO's terror was bearable, that the Arab population was passive, Egypt had broken loose from Russia, Hussein was liquidating the terrorists, the Arab countries were as usual fighting

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among themselves, and America was not exerting pressure—on the contrary, it was supplying us with great quantities of aid and weapons. So why move?

You never know what can happen in the Middle East, and since politics cannot long endure inactivity or deadlock, and since the indecisive usually let themselves be dragged after the resolute, the government and the moderates had neither the strength nor the conviction to oppose partisan attempts to establish settlements, spontaneously, or with the support of sympathizers inside the government who provided half-hearted assistance or accepted whatever the settlers did as a *fait accompli*, or acted out of electoral considerations.

I remember a meeting initiated by then-Foreign Minister Abba Eban in 1969 between senior professors of the Hebrew University and the leadership of the Ministry of Defense. I was asked to express my opinion. I said that as a historian whose diagnosis, like that of a physician, must not be influenced by personal interests, I did not know of any instance where a conflict as complicated and tinted with emotion, irrationality, fears, and feelings of vengeance was ever solved without the involvement of a superpower, alone or in concert with other powers, to offer advice, mediation, and sometimes to impose a solution. In a talk a few days ago with one of Israel's most talented and important diplomats, we agreed that history would not absolve the United States from the fault of not entering into the arena long before 1973. This should have been its responsibility as the leading superpower of the period.

Despite the usual boast of liberated nations of having achieved freedom solely by their own courage, there is almost no example in history in which a national movement did not require the active aid of at least one great power—whose support flowed from self-interest, or from historic or ideological sentiments. Naturally, support from abroad only comes once the people themselves have risen in revolt and proved their stubborn resistance. The Greeks in the 19th century were perhaps the first to succeed in kindling world opinion against their enemies by the use of a greath myth. All the bravery and martyrology of the Irish and the Poles, however, did not help them in the 20th century; no great power was prepared to tangle with Britannia, "ruler of the waves," or to risk tampering with the balance of the three great northern powers who regarded the dissection of Poland as basic to their alliances.

In recent years, our status has been that of rebels against the international system. Nothing is easier than to win applause for fulminations against the wicked gentiles, the stupidity and selfishness of the nations. Yet, all these accusations, though not groundless, do not explain our condition or advance our cause.

Every national liberation movement is initially a kind of rebellion against the international order. International law is usually on the side of the states that are in power. It consecrates existing authority and the status quo. Rebels seek to change things, if necessary by force; they try to move borders, to upset the balance of power. But every liberation movement that attains independent statehood expresses—by the very act of joining the family of nations—its willingness to accept the rules of the international game by fulfilling two conditions: a readiness to accept international law and proof of its ability to maintain law and order within its own borders regardless of the nature of the regime.

In the last two or three years, the State of Israel sometimes has given the impression that it is far from scrupulous in its observance of the first condition, and that it is incapable of fulfilling the second. The doctrines proclaimed by Israel's official spokesmen, or by spokesmen in good standing with the government, are directly opposed, or unacceptable, to the family of nations. Situations are created that are reminiscent of the stand of revolutionary France, which, by proclaiming the principle of the people's sovereignty, denied the obligations taken on earlier by the French kings vis-à-vis other kings at a time when they embodied the

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sovereignty of their states. Yet, France still demanded that the foreign kings' commitments toward France continue as valid obligations, since these other states had not yet liberated themselves from the monarchical yoke.

We claim, similarly, that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are not conquered territories and that therefore the restrictions of international law do not apply to us, particularly with regard to settlement, confiscation of land, and so forth, since we consider these lands to have been "liberated." This claim, by the way, has a long and respectable history; for the term "occupation" went out of fashion with the French Revolution and every conqueror since has proclaimed himself a "liberator." The extremists in Gush Emunim, on the other hand, use religious sanctions in order to justify their activities in the territories.

There is nothing more contemptible and harmful than the use of religious sanctions in a conflict between nations. It is doubltful whether the young man from Gush Emunim who made the Elon Moreh appeal had any idea of the Pandora's box he was opening when he argued, crudely but in a seemingly honest manner, that he and his comrades wanted to settle in the place they had chosen, not for reasons of security but because God had commanded the Children of Israel to inherit the Land of Canaan. Wars of religion cannot be resolved by compromise, by "give and take a little"; and this young man was provocatively inviting a Muslim declaration of *Jihad* and a Vatican pronouncement that since the Jews had rejected Jesus they were no longer the "chosen people" and thus God's promises to Abraham were now invalid.

A religious claim is valid when it relates to matters between people and their creator—to prayer, fast, atonement, faith, and ritual. It does, however, inspire opposition if it disregards others' claims and assumes the right to impose its way, or to harm the rights, freedoms, and interests of others. A religious claim will give a strong impression of hubris, an ambition of mastery, if it tries to subordinate the believers of one religion to those of another. It is one thing for the believer to remain within the boundaries of debate over passages in his holy books and theological commentaries; it is quite another if behind him stand tanks, planes, missiles, soldiers, and police, ready to use direct or indirect violence.

An influential American journalist told me recently about "a dialogue of the deaf and dumb" he had held with members of Gush Emunim who had attempted to persuade him that theirs was a holy war. The non-Jew pressed them: "What does the use of tanks and planes, the occupation of territories and political rule, have to do with religion?" "Don't you understand," they replied, "for us, religion is total, and religious commandments and political practice are interdependent." This kind of Khomeiniism is likely to return us to the days when millions were ready to join the Crusades to slaughter millions of others in order to keep them from going to Hell, in their own way, and to the early militaristic days of Islam when Holy War was declared against non-believers desecrating the name of God and thereby insulting the believers. This is just like Qaddafi of Libya, who dreams of an Islamic Europe and feels an obligation to aid all, including terrorist anarchists, who seek to shake the foundations of Western civilization.

After hundreds of thousands had been killed, or had died of hunger and plague, and entire nations had been destroyed, Europe grew tired of religious wars. Shrewd people realized that before the believers would have a chance to arrive in Heaven, the zealots on all sides would have turned the earth into Hell. They resolved to separate religion completely from politics, just as they had once separated religion from science. Claims such as those of Gush Emunim sound to the international community much like that biblical passage—"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ayalon"—would sound in an astronomers' debate.

In the eyes of most of the earth's people—that is to say, the cultures that do not know the Bible, the Covenant made between God and the Jewish people, or even our historic right to the Land of Israel—all this is not binding. The Christian nations, in as much as they still have attachment to the Bible, usually

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treat the biblical stories (so—we must admit—do most Jews) as allegories produced by primitive tribes who had not yet reached a high level of abstraction.

The term "historic rights" does not connote a *Kushan* (certificate of registration), a term that characterizes the special link between the Jewish people and its unique cultural and religious contribution to civilization—the spiritual bond between generations that connects the dispersed people to its ancient origins. There is also the fact that throughout centuries of wandering, the Jews have been unable—because of historic memories and universal hostility—to strike roots as citizens and, no less important, to create a political entity in any other territory. Therefore, when the age of self-determination had come, this people found itself persecuted, slandered, outcast, and homeless. It surely seemed natural that it would be promised a home, located in the territory with which it was historically identified and where it would live as a normal nation.

But it is a far stretch from this point to the sanctification of political frontiers that have gone through so many changes in the history of all nations and all times. Even in the age of Jewish political rule in the Land of Israel, large portions of the country were either settled by other ethnic groups or controlled by foreign rulers. What place do Acco, Jenin, Halhul, or Gaza have in Jewish history, compared with Toledo, Vilna, Odessa, and Warsaw? No matter how frustrating it might be, we cannot expect the international community, whose guiding principle is the right of every nation and tribe to self-determination, to treat the Arabs of the Land of Israel, the Palestinians, as a group of bandits who have broken into someone else's home while the owner was away, and are now illegal squatters who must leave this place to make room for the returning owners, or settle for the status of second-class tenants with whatever autonomy the owner, now ruler of the land, deigns to grant them.

It is accepted among historians concerned with nationalism that continuity and the creation of a collective way of life are the foundations of nationhood; a historian does not ask who were the first settlers, for most of those have since been lost or have migrated. One might argue that the Palestinians did not develop a collective consciousness, language, culture, or specific political framework of their own; or that neither the great Arab civilization nor humanity in general would lose anything if a twenty-third Arab state was not established. But once the consciousness of a "we" arises in an ethnic group that is in conflict with settlers alien to themselves, those arguments cannot cancel the fact, undesirable as it may be, that there may well occur a head-on collision between two national movements. We have long preferred to disregard this fact.

Mr. Prime Minister, with all due respect to you as head of the government and as a fellow historian, permit me to make an observation, on the basis of decades of study of the history of nationalism. However ancient, special, noble, and unique our subjective motives may be, the desire, at the end of the 20th century, to dominate and govern a hostile foreign population that differs from us in language, history, culture, religion, consciousness, and national aspirations, as well as in its economic and social structure is like an attempt to revive feudalism.

The question is not a moral one. The idea is simply not feasible, nor is its realization worth the price—as France learned in Algeria. The Soviet analogy is irrelevant: we have neither the material strength nor the requisite spiritual and moral toughness. The only way to bring nations to exist together in our day, ironic and disappointing as it is, is by separating them. God Himself, nature, and history divided the Land of Israel before it was ever divided by human decree. It may well be that the most powerful force that can impel individuals, classes, and nations to act in the modern era is the determination to oppose the hereditary humiliation of an inferior position, arising from the subjection of one people by another. Political inequality leads invariably to social and economic inferiority, since the ruling nation, motivated by feelings of tribal solidarity and fear "lest they multiply and

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become mightier," will try to restrict the growth and power of the subject population, denying it access to office, responsibility, and sensitive positions and, of course, to any activity defined as "subversive." The combination of political subjection, national oppression, and social inferiority is a time bomb. Voltaire is said to have remarked that all men are born equal but that the population of Timbuktu has not yet heard the news.

But by now they have heard the news, and since then the world has not known a moment's peace. Whoever speaks of the need for one people to rule over another for security reasons leads his audience astray. To do so is to sit deliberately on a volcano; it is a source of insecurity and perpetual alarm. The rebellious hostility of a subjected population, particularly if it is supported by millions on the other side of the border, neutralizes any degree of security provided by holding on to this hill or that stream, a strait or marsh, in an age of long-range missiles and bombs. There is something repulsive in the kind of cynicism or naïveté that claims that settlements are needed to create conditions of coexistence, while everyone knows that for the Arabs each settlement is another sign of dispossession and gradual conquest. The Jewish image suffers as a result of such double-talk that does nothing to enhance our security or honor.

The world is not naïve. It does not believe the claim that a few trailers on a rocky mountain will block the path of a modern army or deter it. Historians remember very well what happened to the Maginot Line, the Siegfried Line, and even the Bar-Lev Line, and how the assurances of the war minister of Napoleon III that the French army was "prepared to the last button" were proven false—or claims that this or that natural barrier would save a nation from destruction. This does not mean that bargaining over borders is impermissible, particularly if such a change will not lead to domination over a foreign population more numerous than it was in the age of feudalism. In the modern age, it is not land that is inherited but the consciousness and will of the people living in it.

Any talk of the holiness of the land or of geographic sites throws us back to the age of fetishism. One of the greatest living Orthodox rabbis in America once told me that he does not know of one authentic holy site in the Land of Israel except for the Wailing Wall. "I even have my doubts about the Cave of Machpelah," added this rabbi, who refuses to give any support to political rabbis.

Your concept of autonomy, Mr. Prime Minister, is an anachronism—a device to lull foreign public opinion. Anyone who has taken a look at the history of the multinational empires of the Hapsburgs and the Romanovs at the end of the 19th century will shake his head at this idea exhumed from the historical junk pile. The last word on Otto Bauer's and Karl Renner's Austrian experiment with autonomy was said at Sarajevo—the inauguration of the greatest international catastrophe till that day. The days of autonomies in the frail states that were erected on the ruins of the Czarist empire were short, hard-pressed, and without glory.

The idea of "personal autonomy," which you took over from the Austrian Marxists, was never proposed by them as an end in itself. Its aim was to supplement and realize territorial autonomy. It was intended for ethnic groups living outside their "homeland." Now, if you apply these ideas to our situation, who can guarantee that the Arabs on our side of the Green Line will not also demand "autonomy"—if it is going to be a permanent condition in the territories?

It is hard to believe that any population would agree to this sort of "autonomy," without a legislative assembly of its own, or that such people would settle for a mere "administrative council" subordinate to the executive authority of an alien sovereignty. History abounds with examples of such legislative assemblies ending up by declaring their independence. When this happens here, will we use our soldiers to disband such a legislative assembly, and will we then put its insurgent leaders on trial for treason?

Let us keep in mind that those who designed this sort of "autonomy" for the national minorities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire argued, and some believed, that the

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empire's territory was not the sole possession of the dominant nationality—but that it belonged equally to all the ethnic and national groups that lived within its boundaries. And let us keep in mind that this belief engendered strong opposition to the recognition of one dominant language (German) or even of a *Verkehrssprache* in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This notion stood in sharp contrast to the concept of an "autonomy" that is graciously granted to minorities by the sovereign people—a people that conceives of itself as the sole sovereign. In our case, we are speaking of a sovereign people that holds on tightly to the ownership of land, to sources of water, to rights to unrestricted settlement—while permitting the national groups to which it has graciously given "autonomy" the right to care for the sewers, to immunize their children, and to maintain elementary schools while unable to determine the content or spirit of what is taught in those schools.

Giving a minority autonomy makes sense—if it is intended as an interim solution for a specified length of time and as a chance to find out if the two nationalities in question can pass the test of coexistence, and can live together as neighbors, in peace.

There are those who say, "But our vital security interests make it imperative that we hold on to our sovereignty over *all* of the present territories of the Land of Israel; and settlements in the territories are crucially needed for our defense." We have already heard from two of your ministers of defense and from some generals that this just is not the case. Such claims (as the thinking majority of the country has known all along) are mere rationalizations for the pursuit of other goals. On the contrary, these settlements are at present destructive of our vital interests and of our Zionist goals—and especially of peace with our neighbors, which is the precondition for achieving all other goals.

To focus solely on the dangers to security arising from the loss of the territories is a grave demagogic error. It sounds strange indeed when it comes, as it usually does, from those who never tire of repeating what a big power we are, and how we are the only secure bastion of the U.S. and of the entire West in the Middle East.

If we are so vulnerable that our entire security depends on a few kilometers of barren hills, what kind of bastion can we possibly be to anyone? This argument from "security" surely must raise doubts in our allies' minds as to our ability to survive at all; and it must make them wonder if it is indeed worthwhile to give us the aid we are constantly requesting in order to guarantee our security. When an Israeli minister and a former general [Arik Sharon] rebukes the American Jewish leadership for keeping silent during the Holocaust, he creates panic lest Israel is on the brink of destruction. Such foolish remarks make it easier for American Jews to understand why Russian immigrants are leaving Israel, and why so many Israelis, too, are emigrating to the U.S. So, for all the noise and tumult surrounding the settlements issue, who, really, are the defeatists—and who are the "brave patriots" who know no fear?

Israel, obviously, is surrounded by enemies prepared to drown it in a sea of blood. Yet, has not Sadat given proof that there are other Arabs, too, who for one reason or another are ready to accept our existence? This now is a fact—for whatever reason. Perhaps it is because such Arabs have concluded that they cannot annihilate us by force, and perhaps because they hope that the State of Israel will destroy itself through its own internal contradictions and its economic weakness, and perhaps because of apathy among Jews in the Diaspora.

It is indeed dangerous to argue that the State of Israel is incapable of defending itself without holding onto the captured territories (granted, of course, some minor rectification of some borders will have to be made for authentic reasons of security). For this implies that Israel cannot exist at all. Is the River Jordan as wide as the Volga or the Mississippi? Are the mountains of Nablus as high as the Himalayas? Does anyone remember the slogan that Sharm el-Sheikh without peace is better than peace without Sharm el-Sheikh? Let us face it, Mr. Prime Minister, the real danger to the existence of the State of Israel

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lies in continuing the Sisyphean attempt to defeat the Palestinians: whoever cannot see now the grave threat of a binational war is blind.

Those of us who speak out against the settlements are opposed by your supporters who ask, "Is not settlement the life-blood of Zionism? What is the difference between Degania in 1913 and Eilon Moreh in 1980? If we don't have the right to settle now, then what gave us the right to do it then?" In considering these arguments, we should remember that history is a record of change. History does not stand still or repeat itself exactly; it is the record of interrelationship and objective change—and the presence (or lack) of human wisdom. Loyalty to a historic tradition is not expressed in a neurotic dependence on past models. It is expressed in frank acknowledgment, with the necessary flexibility, of new and unexpected situations, while preserving the essential core of that tradition, which may take different forms at different times.

History's fuel is not to be found in abstract ideas or utopian desires for adventurism, or in romanticism—but in brutal force that cannot be withstood. Without this force the caravans of history would not be on the move. And if the enthusiasm of the avant-garde succeeds in moving it a bit, it will be stopped when the power runs out. Who has not heard of revolutions or uprisings that were attempted too soon or too late, before or after a change in the supporting factors inherent in a revolutionary condition, in a crisis, or in a particular international constellation?

And here we all remember Marx's poignant remark that history has a compulsion to repeat itself—in situations that may seem similar but are in reality radically different. "History repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce." This remark is now relevant to the present analogy that compares "the towers and the stockades" in the Galilee of our founding days with the improvised colonization of today. But our modern activists are not the pioneers who built roads where there were none, who outmaneuvered cruel enemies and avoided the danger of annihilation. Today's settlers in the territories rely on our army's tanks, helicopters, and planes. They come to demonstrate our presence, to display our force—*not* to plow, to sow, or plant. These settlements are more than a desperate attempt to hold onto the territory of our homeland. They are a political act and its principal purpose is to determine who will rule or, as the settlers put it, "to show the Arabs who is the boss here. . . . to put the Arabs in their place."

Such settling, it seems to me, is tantamount to conducting a kind of war. It will be very difficult to prevent the situation from turning into a head-on collision between two peoples in a land that suffers from "agrarian famine." This process resembles the agrarian wars in Ireland, between colonizing English noblemen and Irish tenant farmers, or Prussia's policy concerning the Polish peasantry within its territory. It is the same wretched discrimination, extortion, robbery, fraud, and repression, on the one hand—and agrarian rebellion and military repression, on the other hand. It is an unfair struggle between two nations when one side can rely on military power, and the other must hold on with its bare teeth and fingernails to its impoverished, tired, arid land. The same holds true when we contemplate the struggle against a foreign invader and a repressive regime. Who is not ashamed when confronted with the wretched sight of Bedouins being driven out, having to move on, again and again, from place to place—"for famine was in the land, and there was no pasture for the sheep. . ."? And all this is done in the name of preserving the nation's laws—as if the Bedouins were accustomed to living in Holland or Switzerland, as a brutal and arrogant general once said.

For all the shame and pain we feel over the harm done to us by our neighbors because of anachronistic perverse policies, our fear should be greater over what these acts will do to us, to the Jewish people, and to our dream of social and moral justice and renaissance. For this dream was one of the vital and beautiful aspects of Zionism, setting it apart from other national liberation movements. The desire to dominate, Mr. Prime Minister, leads to perpetual fear and mistrust of the

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subjugated people and creates terrible temptations that are stronger than any subjectively good intentions.

This situation of perpetual terror and counterterror, retaliatory raids and protective strikes unleashes aggressive and evil impulses that the rule of law barely manages to control. In such an atmosphere nothing positive can develop, there can be no vitality, no joy in living. Do you remember Jean Jaurès' famous answer at the time of the Dreyfus affair to those who saw no reason for socialists trying to save a bourgeois officer from other bourgeois officers? "If we allow evil and aggression and violence to run wild," said Jaurès, "then the whole earth will be corrupted, until it will no longer be fit for socialism." Now, in our country, such corruption is no longer a masochists's bad dream; it is a reality, and it is strangling us. And this is not the product of a government that enjoys tyranny for its own sake—but of a weak government that pretends to be strong and is forced to camouflage its weakness with trickery. This weakness is promoted by zealots who have lost all sanity and common sense and who receive their funding at the expense of tens of thousands of young people living in poverty, all because everything is dedicated to the pipedream that the settlements will be able to prevent the establishment of a PLO state and stave off the opposition of world opinion.

Could the settlements really prevent the establishment of a PLO state—and how are they to assuage world opinion?

Most of our people either oppose or have strong reservations about the settlements. Needless to say, world public opinion universally denounces the current policy as a violation of international law and, indeed, as a unilateral provocation that makes the idea of negotiation seem ridiculous. From this follows the conspiratorial pattern in which these settlements are established, and the way they are fenced in, "for military purposes." The seizure or purchase of land, "for public use," proceeds much in the same way. This is not the way a sovereign, law-abiding nation should operate, nor is it the way of a society whose openness, until now, has always been one of its most admirable qualities.

So it has happened that a government whose leaders were reared on slogans of Jewish pride and honor is now turning our state into an underground movement, using arguments and excuses so blatantly deceitful that they inevitably conjure up in the gentile imagination the figures of the contemptible scheming Jews of traditional anti-Semitic folklore. One of your [former] cabinet ministers [Ezer Weizman], Mr. Prime Minister, has already publicly commented that "we are succeeding in making ourselves hateful to the whole world."

Since the government, for one reason or another, is unable or afraid to initiate its own settlement policy, an avant-garde of passionate zealots has emerged that proclaims itself the protector of the national destiny. These people consider themselves destined to operate in the territories without regard for a cowardly government or for our laws. For these zealots believe that our courts have no jurisdiction when it comes to faith. Indeed, these zealots consider anyone who opposes them as nothing less than traitors.

The result is contempt for the courts; disregard for governmental decrees; scorn for the rule of law and the rights of others—in short, wanton lawlessness in the guise of ardent patriotism. All this is happening while this movement's fifth column within the government succeeds in suppressing the voices of opponents. This century has suffered much, and the Jewish people more than most, from similar groups of a "nation's finest," which always claim they are saving their country, in the name of a divine sanction that allows them proudly to trample on the laws of a democratic society and on human morality.

And so these zealots speak of "the need of the hour," in order to whip up nationalist feelings and to exploit sources of religious mysticism—to fight, in the spirit of the old-time Zealots against any form of wicked "Hellenization." And so they aim to suppress the spirit of pluralism and of skepticism, and to strangle any crtiticism at home or abroad. In short, our latter-day zealots are determined

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to adopt the doctrines of integralist nationalism whose French prophet, Maurice Barrès, once defined truth as the angle of sight of the French national interest. The same imperialistic brand of nationalism flooded Europe at the beginning of the 19th century, and everywhere it made hatred of the Jews its emblem.

Instead of being a nation that is experiencing a renaissance, a nation that is courageous, and proud to be a member of the family of nations, we are manifestly returning to a mentality and a system of actions that rather befit an isolated and Diaspora-bound religious sect. Is it not the way of a sect to remain insistently on the margins of history and to isolate itself from the world? Such a sect, however, is also capable of becoming an armed band of guerrillas, fighting with the instruments of modern technology—according to the patterns of a well-known Master Race.

The Romantic movement of the 19th century gave rise to modern Zionism and the modern idea of a national revival of the Jewish people. The goal of a return to Zion, of course, had been alive among the Jewish people ever since our exile from the Land of Israel. It sustained us through centuries of dispersion. Over the centuries and throughout the Diaspora, Jews have prayed, and still pray, for this return, night and day.

Modern Zionism was one of the last movements to espouse national liberation. It flowered late in the tremendous wave of movements that fought for national freedom after the French Revolution. Almost every suppressed people then began to struggle for liberation—from the Eskimos to the natives of Papua, from the Basques to the tribes of Baluchistan. The driving force behind these movements was, and still is, the concept of human dignity, and of the right of every ethnic or national group to freedom and self-expression. This aspiration captured the imagination of the subjugated nations. And so the search for identity and the desire to express it led national groups to an exploration of their roots. Many began to make a cult of their past, for this was how they could emphasize their uniqueness. Such heralds and prophets of political nationalism as Moses Hess, Leo Pinsker, Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, and even Ze'ev [V.] Jabotinsky did not draw their inspiration from religious experience or even from Jewish history; at least, not in the beginning. They were stirred by the concept of human dignity. They wanted to heal the injuries to Jewish pride, and yearned for the Jewish people hereafter to be spared all humiliation and persecution; it was their burning desire to see the Jewish people in freedom—a member of the family of free nations. These early Zionist leaders were moved to take a more active role in Jewish life by this general awakening of interest in ethnic roots, dignity, and liberation. Even the Zionism of Rabbi Kalischer and Rabbi Alkalai was aroused by the wars of liberation that were being fought by the Greeks, the Serbs, the Hungarians, the Romanians, and the Bulgarians. Moses Hess was inspired by the vision of the resurrection of Athens and of Rome—which he believed to herald, inevitably, the resurrection of Jerusalem.

The Jews were, so to speak, the "last to arrive at the feast" among the movements of national liberation. During the "Spring of Nations" of 1848, the Jews were the only national or ethnic group that did not experience a national awakening. The Jews, however, enthusiastically greeted the revolution as a victory for the ideal of the brotherhood of nations. Many emancipated Jews saw the revolution as a sign that the hour had now come for the Jews to give up their unique status of "chosenness." But then, around 1880, there rose up a murderous wave of mass anti-Semitism—ironically, just at the moment when it seemed as if the dream of human rights had triumphed throughout the world. This fearful wave of anti-Semitism deeply shocked the sensitive, assimilated, European Jews.

At this very time, in Eastern Europe, after the liberation of the serfs, millions of impoverished peasants and aristocrats flowed into the Jewish towns and cities. Thus the Jews faced a situation of danger precisely when their religious security had substantially weakened and their snobbish feelings of

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cultural and intellectual superiority over their "boorish neighbors" were on the rise. The combination of these two trends moved hundreds of thousands of young Jews to join the revolutionary, or nationalist, movements—or to leave their homes and emigrate to America.

This is not to say that Zionism lacked faith in God's promises, and in the hope of redemption, or that it did not derive sustenance from prayers that speak of the return to the land of our fathers; but these were not the sparks that lit the great fires of political Zionism. On the contrary, it was the Jewish people's religious life that received new sustenance through these Zionist, and political, developments. It is quite reasonable to claim that the Jewish religion actually prevented the vision of redemption from being turned into a historical and political concept. The Jewish religion served as a substitute for redemption; the reliance on Providence, on the Messiah, and on miracles, exempted Jews from acting in the here and now. The religion, in a way, even prohibited them from doing so, for the law could be observed and the feelings of longing expressed anywhere in the world . . . and is not today's enthusiastic Zionism-by-proxy of millions of Jews in the Diaspora proof of this? It is no coincidence that Jewish orthodoxy was from the first suspicious of and even hostile to Zionism. Like the Catholic Church, it viewed nationalism as a serious secular competitor to religion and, to a certain extent, as the sin of hastening redemption, without waiting for the Messiah.

Some people argue that it was not solely an internal dialectic—but rather the persecution of the Jews that was the principal reason for the rise of Zionism and for the sympathy extended to it by the best of the gentiles. These people, indeed, are saying something that is elementary to the historian: no matter how great the power of ideas or ideology in the shaping of history may be, the progress of history in the end is determined by various forces, and by various kinds of distress. It is enough, for example, to recall the periodic ebb and flow in the movements of immigration into the Land of Israel in order to demonstrate that this is so. Let us compare, for instance, the wave of immigration in the 1920s with the huge waves of emigration today, during Israel's statehood.

Mr. Prime Minister, you should not regard these meditations as an attempt to defend the creation of a Palestinian or a PLO state. I am not concerned here with the rights of the Arabs regarding whose past and culture I have little knowledge or interest. I am concerned with Israel's security and welfare. And I am concerned with the quality of the people and culture that make up Israel. I have no doubt that the attempt to rule a million and a quarter Arabs against their will may result in corruption and make our beautiful dreams of national and spiritual renewal seem ridiculous. I am convinced that the annexation of the territories will not only fail to increase our security but will also weaken our ability to defend ourselves against hostile neighbors and international opposition.

In a debate with Arnold Toynbee, right after the Six-Day War, I spoke in favor of what later became known as the "Jordanian orientation." I do tremble at the thought of flag-waving PLO brigades streaming into the occupied territories, firm in their belief that they are taking only the first step toward the complete destruction of the State of Israel. . . . Is it possible that our intransigence could destroy any chance—as it has done in the past, when we were in a position of real strength—of accepting another possible kind of settlement, such as an agreement with Jordan, on the basis of partition?

There will be no alternative to a PLO state, if we continue systematically to ignore the Jordanian option, or other possibilities that many seem to fear more than a PLO victory. Nor will we find salvation in an "information" campaign, which solely consists of denunciations of the PLO as Nazis—if we do not put forward a constructive plan that is based on reasonable compromise. Our generation can point to numerous counterparts of the PLO for acts of terrorism, both near and far. We can also point to endless examples of decent

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men who were terrorists until they became cured of their frustration and reached positions of responsibility—such as Kenyatta or Mugabe. It will not be helpful to continue seeing all the good in ourselves and all the evil in others.

All those who are not blinded by zealotry are bound to be very unhappy when they realize the terrible acts that have been committed by Israelis—individually and collectively—sometimes in retaliatory raids, sometimes in protective strikes, and sometimes because we have thought it a *mitzvah* to take vengeance on the helpless. Clearly, the PLO has its sadists. And there is indeed the possibility that a PLO state might turn into a Soviet satellite; but who can guarantee that this will not happen to any of our other Arab neighbors? We must avoid pushing the Arabs into a position where they will feel they have suffered so much humiliation that they might as well use all their strength to die with the Palestinians. . . . And yet, we must use our defensive capability to repel all who threaten our existence and seek to destroy us. Ironically, we have worked hard to convince ourselves that there is no possibility of compromise; that the Arabs are implacably resolved to annihilate us, and that we must therefore act accordingly—because we despair of any possibility of peace, or of international guarantees of borders, or of demilitarization arrangements, or of other solutions. I am afraid, Mr. Prime Minister, that this attitude is likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

We should talk with anyone who is prepared to talk with us and, by doing so, is prepared to recognize our existence and our right to be here, and who is willing to declare so on the eve or in the course of the negotiations. I also would not insist on such solemn declarations as a condition for a dialogue. We Jews have learned in the Middle Ages to treat such declarations more like bargaining chips than obligatory expressions of practical intent. In those days, people already distinguished clearly between the sphere of the kingdom of mercy and the eternal sacred values—by which only God, kings, and saints were able to live—and the Vale of Tears where most mortal sinners are bound by laws by which we somehow manage to live. "The Heavens belong to God, and the Earth is mankind's." Let us admit that politics and political arrangements belong to this lower sphere. Let us also admit that it is permissible, and perhaps even desirable, for the sake of aesthetics and conscience, to pay lip service to lofty principles at the beginning of any agreement—so as to alleviate our conscience and to be able to get down to the necessary compromises and pragmatic agreements. Just as humanity cannot survive in laboratory conditions or sustain itself solely on pure substantiality—so we, too, cannot exist in the realm of purism and sheer elevation.

We invite much trouble when we cling to principles as if they were the word of the Living God and, in doing so, we fall in with the fundamentalist zealots. The most famous document in England's diplomatic history was written by Castlereagh, the Conservative counterrevolutionary, and not, as was thought, by the Progressive Canning. It was a response to an invitation to join the Holy Alliance, and it said that England would never undertake any blanket obligations—in this case, to put down rebellions wherever they might occur. England would, instead, deal pragmatically with situations as they came up, and consider each case on its own merits. Some people who once studied law, and who still respect what they then learned, even though they never practiced the legal profession, love to make declarations of rights every other day. This strikes me as political folly. In life, and certainly in political life, we are not interested in narrowly defined rights or principles, but in the conflicts between opposing rights that are in need of compromise, and that require a profound understanding of the prevailing circumstances.

If we accept that the State of Israel and its people now live under a state of siege and are completely isolated; and if we also accept for a moment that Jewry in the Diaspora is eventually bound to disappear; then—given the country's present economic strangulation

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and its moral and spiritual disintegration—it appears that the Six-Day War was one of Nietzsche's "victories that turn into defeat." The attempt to hold onto the captured territories has turned out to be not the sacred mission that will bring about our redemption and the climax of our history—but a trap, whose burden we cannot withstand without corruption and perhaps even collapse. The world refuses to accept the Revisionist version of Zionism, Mr. Prime Minister, and we do not have the power to force it on them. Nor do we have the strength to establish the "Iron Wall" that Jabotinsky hoped would somehow force the Arabs to accept our existence without losing their self-respect.

Jabotinsky, in contrast to his students, admitted that if "our faith is deep, so is theirs." He refused to believe that they would sell "their country's future" for a mess of pottage; he believed that "any people without exception would fight against the colonization of their country at the hands of people of a different race who come from another country." Balfour was very aware of the contradiction between taking away the right of self-determination from the Arabs of Palestine—and doing so in order to grant the Jewish people a national home. Nonetheless, Balfour was convinced that it was right to ignore the protests of 700,000 Arabs in order to rectify an old historic injustice. At that time, the enlightened world agreed to apply unusual principles to the case of a people that had made a unique contribution to humanity, and had suffered persecution as had no other people in history.

In our situation today, in contrast to what generations have considered our unique gift to humanity—the idea of the rule of the spirit rather than the rule of force—we are using that rule of force. We now are using the rule of force to implement our historic rights; rights that, in their present interpretation, are holy neither to the gentiles nor to most Jews. And so we no longer can expect the world to look upon our rights as so pressing that they ought to cancel out the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination. Without the foundation that is represented by the writings of our prophets, we are nothing but a peculiar band of tribes that has given nothing to humanity except a lot of trouble, and that is now asking to expand at the expense of another people and to subordinate this other people's freedom to its own security needs, real or imaginary, as well as to its self-interest. . . .

Mr. Prime Minister, the policies of your government are turning the State of Israel into an underground sect; they invite the Jews of the Diaspora to disavow liberal values that have not only made it possible for them to reach positions of unprecedented influence—but values that represent a philosophy to which they are deeply committed. The chauvinist sectarianism that your government is encouraging (and so the version of East European religious orthodoxy to which it has granted special rights while denying such rights to all other forms of Judaism) not only fails to bring our people closer to Judaism; it also harms our people's unity and alienates them from Judaism and from the State of Israel—for the majority of our people will not agree to go back to ghetto life.

The future of Israel and of American Jewry is interconnected. Should, heaven forbid, Judea fall a third time, the Jews of America and of the world will have suffered an overwhelming blow. There would be paralyzing despair, breakdown, and a massive departure from Judaism. Should something fearful happen to American Jewry—despite the calculations of our millenarians who regard anti-Semitism as fuel for Zionism and a supplier of Israel's immigrants—an isolated Israel would not be saved from such a huge conflagration. The future of the entire Jewish people is totally dependent on close cooperations between Israel—as a culture-creating, open, and liberal society—and Diaspora Jewry, particularly American Jewry, some of which today is part of the elite of humanity.

It is not often that a historic problem of a people reaches so dramatic a point that we can characterize it, without exaggeration, with such slogans as that of the French Revolution's "Our country is in danger; help us whoever can!"—or the Russian revolutionaries' call, "Now or never!" You

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will agree with me, Mr. Prime Minister, that we have reached such a point in our history. Our people now are divided into two camps.

The first camp is convinced there is an international conspiracy to create a PLO state that will be controlled by the Russians and will seek to destroy Israel, and therefore it is imperative to speed up and intensify the settlement process and to pursue an uncompromising policy, inspired by "courageous activism." This camp believes that only thus will catastrophe be averted.

The second camp believes that the moment has come for us to make peace with our neighbors, and that the effort to expand our borders and to force our rule on the population of the territories will dispel all chances for peace, and create dangers for our country from which there can be no salvation.

The adherents of this second camp, Mr. Prime Minister, view your historic achievement of peace negotiations with Egypt as an ambiguous success, while your supporters, the adherents of the first camp, hope that the Camp David agreements, by putting an end to any threat from Egypt, will grant us a free hand to rule over the occupied territories. Your adherents believe that this will lead to the completion of the territorial homeland, that it will grant "personal autonomy" to its Arab residents—confirming Israel's sovereignty and our people's right to settle anywhere within this homeland's borders.

Your opponents, however, are fearful that the other parties to this treaty will continue to view this agreement and the proffered autonomy as nothing but a stage on the way toward guaranteeing a separate Palestinian entity. And your opponents are afraid that the differences of opinion on this issue will intensify the conflict between the Arabs and an Israel that is now weaker as a result of its withdrawal from the Sinai and its oil fields.

I have attempted here, Mr. Prime Minister, to draw your attention to the serious structural changes that have occurred during the decades since the Holocaust in the Jewish population centers that gave birth to Zionism. I have referred to the lack of an effective Zionist response from the Diaspora in the form of mass emigration to Israel. In addition I have tried to outline the recent developments in the larger world, such as decolonization and its ideological and political consequences. I have tried to point also to the rise of civilization and peoples who have no ties to the Bible and feel no obligation toward the Jews. I have also spoken of the important changes that have occurred in the position of the Arab world, thanks to its near-monopoly of the oil resources, which are so vital to our industrial civilization, and of the declining military clout and spiritual strength of the Western nations who are so close to us in tradition and spirit. We must be aware, of course, of the alliance between the Communist ideology (now transformed into the ideology of an imperialist power structure) and the national liberation movements. This alliance has led to the political isolation of the Jewish state and has succeeded in distorting the image of Israel and its historic and moral significance in world public opinion.

Tragically, our victory in the Six-Day War has led our people to a loss of a sense of proportion regarding the strength of the State of Israel, and has shifted too much of our focus upon military matters, away from other significant factors vital to a democratic society. This focus on the military has diverted much of our attention from the nation's economic and social problems—which have to be solved *before* there can be any effective military strength.

So we won on the battlefield but were not strong enough to force our enemy to make peace with us. And the more Israel increased its weaponry, the more dependent it became on American aid and support. Meanwhile, the Palestinians—termed "refugees" in the U.N. Resolution 242—succeeded in obtaining recognition as a people.

Our refusal to treat the Palestinians as a collective entity has diminished Israel's legitimacy in the eyes of the world. And now our people are divided over the meaning and interpretation of the proposed "autonomy." Is it home rule, with selected clerks performing duties that are essentially controlled by the Israeli government? Or is it self-rule, based

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on partition into two *autonomous* sections, with autonomous authorities in each of them?

Those Israelis who do not believe that the government's autonomy proposals are acceptable to the Arabs of the world are now asking that you preserve the possibility of reaching a real peace settlement. They ask that you preserve the chance for peace by an agreement on territorial autonomy, or even by agreeing to a Palestinian national home in exchange for effective guarantees and a federation with Jordan and a federal tie to Israel. This option seems more promising and less dangerous than the one you have proposed.

The more time passes, the more polarized become both sides, and the Israeli public, too. There is the grave danger of civil war between Jews and Arabs—and Jews and Jews.

Mr. Prime Minister, in the eyes of the majority of the nation, your allegiance to the faith of your youth, and your conviction of having a historic mission to deliver "the home of our fathers" intact to the coming generations appear more and more as an obsession. It seems to be an obsession that has no chance of realization and is a source of errors and disasters that are dividing the nation as well as the Coalition that you lead. Conflicting views, frustrations, and feuds are now paralyzing the operation of that Coalition. They are also destroying the people's respect for its parliamentary institutions, for the democratic process, and for our judicial system and its moral authority. This has led to the creation of extra-parliamentary groups, which now see themselves as agents of the national destiny and the saviors of their people. These groups believe themselves subject only to their own law and rules. . . .

There comes a time in the life of a politician when he must weigh whether, in changing circumstances, he will be an asset or an obstacle in the service of his people. More than one historian has asked in astonishment why, for instance, Lloyd George did not leave political life at the end of his extraordinary historic mission, or why Churchill insisted on remaining on as prime minister for his final term.

What should a leader do who is unable to shake off his youthful faith, even though in their hearts he and others are doubtful that it can be realized? Before him is the example of the Social Democratic leader Philip Scheidemann, the first German chancellor of the Weimar Republic. When the Allies' peace terms of Versailles were announced in 1919, he solemnly swore in an emotional address before the Reichstag: "This hand will not move to sign this disgraceful document!" And Scheidemann resigned. Others were found to sign that document. □

Translated from the Hebrew by Arthur H. Samuelson

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Richard W. Krouse

Capitalism, Socialism, and Political Equality

What is the relationship between capitalism, socialism, and political equality? Several recent essays by Robert A. Dahl on the ideal of "procedural democracy" in political and economic life have significantly advanced our understanding of this issue without, however, providing an altogether satisfactory resolution. I shall therefore attempt here to further advance the valuable dialogue ("What is Political Equality?") initiated by Philip Green and continued by Robert A. Dahl in the Summer 1979 issue of *Dissent*. I shall focus upon what I take to be a critical ambiguity in Dahl's recent discussions of the relationship between ownership and control of the modern productive enterprise. I will claim that Dahl's own commitment to full procedural democracy in economic and political life necessarily entails a more fully explicit commitment to socialist aspirations than he has yet been willing to embrace.

The specific argument is meant, moreover, to exemplify a much broader thesis: that the liberal-democratic commitment to full individual equality of civil and political citizenship, when properly unpacked, requires a commitment not merely to formal equality of abstract right before the law but also to effective material equality of economic and social power—in our time, to democratic socialism.

II

DAHL'S RECENT WORK has emphasized the desirability, as a necessary feature of any inclusive polyarchy or "procedural democracy," of broader and deeper political equality. He has become increasingly outspoken, indeed eloquent, about the degree to which entire categories of adult persons, such as women and slaves, have been systematically excluded from formal equality of civil and political citizenship by ostensibly democratic politics from Periclean Athens to Rousseau's Geneva, to Tocqueville's America and beyond. It is unfair to criticize Robert Dahl, as does Philip Green, for having failed to move beyond a thin liberal commitment to purely abstract or formal civil and political equality. For Dahl has in recent years become increasingly preoccupied with the sense in which even the fullest formal equality of civil and political right, once extended to hitherto disenfranchised groups, has in practice often been undermined by deeper structures of economic and social inequality.

Dahl's attention to the problem of effective political equality has led him to a sharpened focus upon the socioeconomic bases of political life, and to concentration upon certain key problems in political economy. He has increasingly directed his attention to the complex interrelationships between political forms ("polyarchy" vs. "hegemony"), the distribution of socioeconomic resources (concentration vs. dispersion), and systems of economic ownership and control (capitalism vs. socialism).[1]

Robert Dahl has come to stress the importance, as a necessary condition of meaningful political equality, of a more equal distribution of socioeconomic resources. This commitment has taken two basic forms, both at work in Dahl's recent contributions to *Dissent* (see again, Note 1).

First, Dahl emphasizes more explicitly than

[1] See Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 48-61; *After the Revolution: Authority in a Good Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 115-40; "Pluralism Revisited," *Comparative Politics* (January 1978), pp. 191-203; "On Removing Certain Impediments to Democracy in the United States," *Dissent* (Summer 1978), 310-24; "What Is Political Equality," *Dissent* (Summer 1979), 363-68.

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before the standing threat posed to political equality by gross inequalities in the distribution of wealth and income (such as those tolerated in, for example, the United States at present). Rejecting the feasibility of regulatory reform, he now urges a program of egalitarian redistribution.

Second, Dahl has also emphasized the sense in which political equality is vitiated by deeper structures of hierarchical or "hegemonic" power and authority in economic and social life. He explicitly identifies hierarchical control in the internal governance of the corporation as the second major counterdemocratic consequence of modern capitalism. At least since the publication ten years ago of *After the Revolution?*, he has been calling for the democratization of what he calls the "Corporate Leviathan." Giant firms, he now emphasizes, are both "public enterprises," with societywide consequences, and "political systems" in their own right—they are "essentially public or social, not private." Therefore both as a necessary condition for full political equality and as a desirable goal in its own right, "the criteria of procedural democracy ought to be applied to the government of firms. Dahl has maintained, in general, the position that there are no necessary connections between forms of ownership, on the one hand, and systems of control on the other. The relationship between the two, Dahl argues, is in the end purely contingent. Hence the choice between alternative forms of ownership—say, between reformed capitalism and democratic socialism—is, or ought to be, a primarily technical one: a correct answer "depends as much upon technical as upon ideological or philosophical judgments, and perhaps a good deal more." Thus far, however, these arguments have failed to extend with sufficient precision the radical implications of his own commitment to full procedural democracy in economic life.

To begin with, Dahl's analysis of the relationship between ownership and control has been complicated by the fact that it has appeared in the context of discussions of two separate and separable issues: (1) the degree of organizational or associational pluralism within a society; (2) the internal distribution of power and authority within the autonomous, here economic, subsystems of a pluralistic social order.

1. *Social Pluralism.* Dahl begins by arguing persuasively that there are no necessary connections between legal forms of ownership, on the one hand, and the presence or absence of extensive social pluralism on the other. Against the classical liberal view, Dahl argues that a privately owned economy is not a necessary condition for a high degree of organizational or associational pluralism (which is in turn a necessary, though not sufficient, condition of polyarchy); he cites here Yugoslavia as the example of a publicly or socially owned, yet decentralized and competitive, economy. Nor is private ownership a sufficient condition of extensive social pluralism; here he cites the example of hegemonic polities, such as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, with privately owned economies yet centrally dominated social orders. Conversely, common sense suggests that public or social ownership is neither a necessary condition for a pluralistic (if not egalitarian) social order (witness any of the existing polyarchal democracies); nor, even less plausibly, is it a sufficient condition for extensive social pluralism (witness any of the existing Soviet-style regimes). Thus there are no strictly necessary relationships between legal forms of ownership and the degree of socioeconomic concentration or dispersion. Let us formulate this view as *Proposition 1: Neither private nor public ownership of the economy is either a necessary or a sufficient condition for extensive social pluralism.*

2. *Economic Democracy* Dahl's discussion of forms of ownership, however, concerns not merely the degree of pluralism within society at large but also the degree of democracy within the economic enterprise as such. Here he sometimes seems to maintain a separate position that we might cast as *Proposition 2: Neither private nor public ownership is either a necessary or a sufficient condition for full procedural democracy within the economic enterprise.* This, however, is a far more contestable claim.

Dahl begins by challenging the theoretical confusion according to which ownership of an enterprise is simply equivalent to control of that enterprise—that is, private ownership is equivalent to control by private owners; and public or social ownership (depending upon one's ideological or philosophical perspective) is equivalent either to democratic control by the "associated producers" or to hegemonic control by the bureaucratic state. Against this naive view, Dahl begins by asserting the unexceptionable proposition that "forms of control are not fully determined by forms of ownership." For, clearly, ownership "is definitely not a sufficient condition for control."[2] Private ownership is not a sufficient condition for control by private owners: privately owned corporations

[2] "Pluralism Revisited," 194.

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can be, and in late capitalism often are, controlled not by property-owning entrepreneurs but by nonowning managers. Public or social ownership, likewise, is a sufficient condition neither for democratic control by the associated producers nor for hegemonic control by the bureaucratic state: publicly or socially owned enterprises range from hierarchical systems of managerial dominance, as in Soviet-style command economies, to the system of social self-management and workers' participation practiced in Yugoslavia. Thus neither private nor public ownership is a sufficient condition of control by private or public owners—so far, we may freely grant Dahl his case.

But from the noncontroversial claim that the question of control is partially independent of ("not fully determined by") the question of ownership, Dahl then seems to slide, albeit not without some equivocation, to the stronger and far more controversial claim that the question of control is entirely independent of the question of ownership. Because one "cannot . . . be certain that a particular form of control requires a particular form of ownership," that is, because a specific form of ownership "may not be a necessary condition" for a specific control relationship, the question of control is "theoretically prior to"[3]—and, to the degree that these assertions hold, logically independent of—the question of ownership. On this point Dahl's argument goes awry.

Even if it is granted, as it clearly should be, that "government ownership is as consistent as private ownership with despotic control of enterprises," it does not necessarily follow, as the converse must if Dahl is fully to establish his case, that private ownership is as consistent as public or social ownership with democratic control of enterprises. For surely it seems empirically plausible to maintain that private ownership in anything like its present form—that is, private ownership of productive resources by a restricted social class—is not compatible with full (as distinct from what Dahl labels "pseudo-") procedural democracy within the economic enterprise. Private ownership is not a sufficient condition of one specific control relationship, namely, direct control by private owners themselves; but from this it does not follow, as Dahl's argument tacitly assumes, that private ownership is not a sufficient condition of any more general type of control relationship. For, again, it is surely not unreasonable to infer, on the basis of available evidence, that private ownership of productive resources by a restricted class is a sufficient condition of *some* form of economic hierarchy or hegemony within the enterprise—whether exercised directly by entrepreneurial owners themselves, as in competitive or liberal capitalism, or by nonowning managers (however "relatively autonomous" *vis-à-vis* private owners), as in corporate or late capitalism. At a minimum, the burden of proof can here reasonably be placed upon Dahl to demonstrate that private ownership in the conventional sense is, or could in some reformed but recognizably similar condition become, compatible with full procedural democracy in economic life. Barring evidence to the contrary, we may conclude that private ownership (in the specified sense) is not as compatible as public or social ownerwhip with democratic control of the enterprise—indeed, more strongly, that it is fundamentally incompatible with such control.

To say that private ownership is not as compatible as public or social ownership with democratic control of the enterprise is in itself, of course, to say nothing about the relative compatibility or incompatibility of alternative forms of public or social ownership with procedural democracy in economic and political life. Again, as Dahl argues, some forms of "government" ownership are clearly every bit as consistent as private ownership with despotic control of the enterprise. More strongly, it may well be true, as classical liberals claim, that pure public ownership by a bureaucratic state necessarily tends to generate hierarchical or "hegemonic" control relationships—that, by consolidating both political and economic power in the hands of bureaucratic state officials, this specific form of public ownership would necessarily pose a severe and standing threat to procedural democracy in both polity and economy. One might fully concede this point, however, while at the same time maintaining that there exist alternative forms of public or, perhaps more properly, social ownership (and decentralized self-management); and that these forms, by insuring the pluralistic dispersion of economic and political power, could avoid the classic pitfalls of bureaucratic state socialism. If private ownership of productive resources by a restricted class is in fact a sufficient condition of hierarchical control, then this is all that is necessary to conclude that private ownership in this sense is not as compatible as (some forms of) public or social ownership with democratic control.

III

THE IMPLICATIONS are obvious—and politically important. If private ownership is a sufficient

[3] Ibid.

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condition of hierarchical or hegemonic control of the economic enterprise in some sense, then public or social ownership in some form is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for full democratic control of the economic enterprise, and arguably of the polity as well. Public or social ownership, that is, is not merely permitted but in fact required by Dahl's *own* ideal of full procedural democracy (a) within the economy; and (b), to the degree that formal equality of civil and political right can be activated only by effective equality of economic and social power, within the polity at large. To this degree, therefore, the relationship between ownership and control is not purely contingent or "technical," as Dahl would have it, but partially necessary. And on this crucial point—socialism as a necessary condition for full procedural democracy in both economy and polity—Dahl should straighforwardly accept the implications of his own argument.

Moreover, and still more generally, the stated implications extend well beyond the confines of the immediate case at hand. They exemplify specifically a broader thesis: that democratic liberalism, in order to preserve the integrity of its *own* core values, must embrace socialist aspirations. The pursuit of this rapprochement in both theory and practice ought to rank high upon the agenda of both liberal democrats, such as Dahl, and democratic socialists, such as Green. □

Robert A. Dahl

A Reply to Richard Krouse

Everyone concerned with the relation of forms of ownership to political equality owes a substantial debt to Richard W. Krouse for his lucid analysis. It invites one to deal with the issues with the greatest clarity one can bring to this difficult task and for that we should all be grateful. In addition, I appreciate his scrupulous restatement of my own argument, particularly since the various pieces of it have been scattered over a number of different publications, which, in an unusual demonstration of scholarly responsibility and no little patience, he has undertaken to read.

As Richard Krouse rightly points out, different forms of ownership bear on the question of political equality in at least two ways: within economic enterprises, and in the political society generally. As I understand his argument, his conclusion as to the possibility of political equality finally depends on his conclusion as to economic enterprises. I want therefore to concentrate on his argument about the relation of forms of ownership to internal democracy within firms.

I

ON THIS MATTER, Krouse's argument is open to two possible interpretations, which might be called the Loose Formulation and the Strict Formulation. The Loose Formulation asserts that private ownership "is not *as* compatible as public or social ownership with democratic control of the enterprise." The Strict Formulation asserts that private ownership "is *fundamentally incompatible* with such control." The Loose Formulation implies that democratic control might be *possible* with private ownership but would be more *difficult* or less likely than with public or social ownership. The Strict Formulation implies that democratic control of enterprises is flatly *impossible* with private control. Because it would require a messier and more inconclusive discussion to evaluate the Loose than the Strict Formulation, and because Krouse's considered judgment appears to favor the Strict Formulation, I want to direct my response to the more clear-cut proposition.

The extent to which Krouse and I differ, where we differ at all, turns partly on the meaning of the terms private, social, and public ownership. Lawyers are fond of pointing out that private property is not a single right but a bundle of rights that in principle could be peeled off one by one like the leaves of an artichoke. At some point in the process, an artichoke is no longer an artichoke, but

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can we say precisely when? The way Krouse qualifies the meaning of private property is crucial to his argument. He refers to "private ownership in anything like its present form—that is, private ownership of productive resources by a restricted social class," and again, "private ownership in the conventional sense . . . or . . . in some reformed but recognizably similar condition." Now if one were simply to *define* private ownership to mean (a) the right to manage the enterprise (b) held by stockholders who exclude all employees except top management, then Krouse would, of course, be categorically correct.

But if either (a) or (b) were untrue, then his conclusion would not follow. Consider two possibilities: (a*) private ownership is understood to mean that investors have a legal right to share in the profits of the firm but not the right to choose or control the decisions of the managers; (b*) private ownership is understood to mean, as now, that owners have a legal right to control the firm but the firm is owned exclusively by the people who work in it, each person having one vote (no matter what the distribution of shares may be). Now Krouse might object that neither (a*) nor (b*) is consistent with what he means by private ownership. But if neither is private ownership, would he insist that both are instances of social or public ownership?

Krouse might also object that neither (a*) nor (b*) is possible. However, given the number of employee-owned firms existing in the United States, I do not see how one could argue that (b*) is impossible.[1] To be sure, one might object that these firms are exceptional and as a general solution employee ownership is not very likely. But this is to abandon the Strict Formulation in favor of the Loose Formulation. And even the Loose Formulation entitles one to wonder whether social or public ownership is more likely than employee ownership to come about in the United States as a general solution.

I do not assert that the Loose Formulation is invalid. My argument does not imply that employee ownership, or any other modified form of private ownership, is more favorable to internal democracy within economic enterprises than social or public ownership. I have simply tried to explain why I believe that the Strict Formulation, which holds that social or public ownership is a necessary condition for internal democracy in an economic enterprise, is unwarranted.

To sum up, if it were true that (A) a country could not be fully democratic in a political sense unless its economic enterprises were internally democratic; and (B) economic enterprises could not be internally democratic unless they were socially or publicly owned; then it would follow (C) that a country could not be fully democratic unless enterprises were socially or publicly owned. But since Krouse has failed to establish (B), the conclusion does not follow.

II

IT WOULD STILL BE POSSIBLE to defend (B) as a Loose Formulation of likelihoods, though as I suggested earlier, a satisfactory defense would have to be lengthy, complex, and less conclusive than I believe Krouse intended. Even if (B) were shown to be dubious, it would be possible to defend (C) on other grounds. Or (C) might also be given a Loose Formulation, asserting, for example, that in the United States at present a greater area of social or public ownership would facilitate the democratic process. I am rather inclined to believe that as Loose Formulations, (B) and (C) could be justified, though this is hardly the place to explore the issues. Instead, let me offer the following brief conclusions.

1. It is surely true, as Krouse says, that "a commitment to full individual equality of civil and political citizenship, when properly unpacked, requires a commitment not merely to formal equality of abstract right before the law but also to effective material equality of economic and social power." Most political theorists from Aristotle onward, including Harrington, Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, have so asserted, as have a good many American advocates of democracy from Noah Webster and Jefferson onward. Indeed, Webster asserted the view, which was far from eccentric in his time, that "an equality of property, with a necessity of alienation, constantly operating to destroy combinations of powerful families, is the very soul of a republic."[2]

2. Whether today this commitment requires democratic socialism obviously depends in part on the meaning of terms and also in part on how one solves a number of tough theoretical, technical, and empirical questions that have not been at all well explored by socialists, liberals, or anyone else. In my view these questions cannot be adequately

[1] See, for example, Daniel Zwerdling, "Employee Ownership—How Well Is It Working?," *Working Papers*, May/June, 1979.

[2] From Gerald Stourzh, *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (1970), quoted in J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975), p. 534.

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answered at the level of general discussions about socialism and capitalism or private and public ownership. I fear that only Loose Formulations, not Strict Formulations, will prove to be satisfactory, and Loose Formulations are necessarily quite messy and dependent on a number of contestable theoretical and practical judgments.

3. What is "private" and what is "social" or "public" depends on the system of controls: on who may do what with what and how. No solution to controlling enterprises will be satisfactory unless it provides for a satisfactory system of both internal and external controls. External controls may be exercised by local, regional, or national, even international, governments, by other economic units such as rival firms, suppliers, and buyers, and by markets. The greater the control over decisions that is exercised by groups inside the firm, say by workers, the more that firm is "private" vis-à-vis the rest of society. Imagine that the workers in each firm had complete authority to make *all* decisions about the firm, and that the rest of society had no effective control over the decisions. It would not matter much whether ownership were nominally in the hands of the workers, society, or the government. Whatever the nominal form of ownership, the firm would be essentially "private" in relation to everyone outside it.

4. Because of fears that workers' control might lead to the triumph of the "private" interests of the workers in an enterprise over social or public interests, or "the interests of the working class as a whole," socialists have never been of one of mind about whether to aim for internal democracy in economic enterprises, let alone how. Ignoring authoritarian socialists whose ideal has been a central command economy and a one-party dictatorship over the state, even socialists of democratic persuasion and intentions have, to say the least, been quite divided. For example, after a series of fascinating debates the British Labour party by 1935 had pretty decisively rejected the ideas of workers' control in favor or parliamentary and bureaucratic controls, which at the time looked to the leadership to be more "democratic."[3]

5. The most creative proposals for dealing with the controls and ownership or economic enterprises seem to me to be coming now from democratic socialists and others who are capable of transcending the older (and in my view mainly anachronistic) controversies. I particularly have in mind the recent proposals of the Swedish labor movement (LO) and Social Democratic party for a system of Wage-Earner Funds, an idea first presented in 1975 by the economist Rudolf Meidner and his colleagues in the Research Division of the Swedish Confederation of Labor and subsequently elaborated into a rather complex design, and a somewhat analagous solution advanced by the Danish Social Democratic party. Both schemes are intended to bring about profound changes in the ownership and control of larger firms, increase the supply of funds available for investment, strengthen incentives and productivity, and overcome existing limits on redistributing wealth and income set by the strong resistance of voters to further taxation. Although the two schemes differ substantially, both reflect a radical rethinking of the old issues of socialism, capitalism, and democracy.

If, as many Swedes believe, the Swedish Model no longer works, it may be a good time not only for Swedes and Danes but also for Americans to give some serious consideration to these new proposals for dealing with old, difficult, and persisting problems. □

[3] I described these debates and the outcome years ago in "Workers' Control of Industry and the British Labour Party," *American Political Science Review*, October 1947.

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Nicolaus Mills

Male Soap Opera

Long after it should be dead at the box office, *Kramer vs. Kramer* is still thriving. It is not hard to figure out why. *Kramer vs. Kramer* is a film with a subject to wrench the heart—a failed New York marriage and a painful child-custody suit. It features two superb actors, Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep, as Ted and Joanna Kramer, plus an affecting child, Justin Henry, as their son Billy; and under writer-director Robert Benton's control, the film moves at a vignette pace that never bores.

A second viewing of *Kramer vs. Kramer* makes all this success hard to take. For at bottom what it shows is that *Kramer vs. Kramer* is soap opera brought to the screen. The only difference is that the movie has reversed the standard soap opera formula in which the man leaves home for the sake of adventure, the woman sacrifices herself to preserve the family, and the man, finally realizing what he has done, forfeits all claims to domestic peace. The adventurer in *Kramer vs. Kramer* is Joanna Kramer, who in order to "find herself" leaves her young son, her husband, and her Upper East Side apartment; while the homebody is Ted Kramer, who changes from an ambitious Madison Avenue executive into a nurturing parent, one who would rather spend time with his son than court a new account.

Yet, to dismiss *Kramer vs. Kramer* as an updated *Stella Dallas* or a sophisticated version of the soaps that now dominate afternoon television is to ignore what is most important about it: its appeal to a vast middle-class audience. *Kramer vs. Kramer* is not just descriptive of middle-class life in urban America. By what it simplifies and softens, it is prescriptive as well. Director Robert Benton may not have the eye of an Ann Beattie or a Joan Didion, but he has a vision of America in the 1980s that is far more accessible than theirs, and in *Kramer vs. Kramer* he relies on this vision to make his audience identify with Ted and Joanna Kramer. The significance—one might also say the cynicism—of Benton's perspective becomes clear when we look at the social assumptions that structure *Kramer vs. Kramer.*

- *Men can be housewives, too.* This is in many ways the most positive notion in *Kramer vs. Kramer*, and it is the basis for the comedy that dominates the first half of the film. The Ted Kramer we first see trying to shop, cook, and console his son is a figure straight from the funny pages, and his domestic failures illustrate how alienating his career ambitions have been. By contrast, as *Kramer vs. Kramer* develops and Ted settles into the role of single parent, he becomes admirable. He becomes softer, less worried about money, more concerned with what it means to be a nurturing parent. Moreover, Ted accomplishes his transformation in a distinctly masculine way. It is his emotional attentiveness that makes his son happy, and the fact that the two of them have chocolate doughnuts for breakfast or TV dinners at night does not, as far as *Kramer vs. Kramer* goes, reduce Ted's effectiveness as a parent. The difficulty with this ultimately rosy picture of "masculine motherhood" is, unfortunately, all that it leaves out.

Ted's trials as a parent are played (mostly) for cuteness, and only rarely do we get a serious internal sense of what it means for him to be a single father. We don't know what happens to Billy between the end of school and when Ted gets home from work. We don't, except for one brief scene, know how Ted handles dating. We don't even know how Ted, who shops before going to the office, keeps his groceries from spoiling. The Ted Kramer we see at the end of Benton's film is, to be sure, a man we believe could cope with all these familial details. But the fact that he is never required to do so in convincing depth is revealing. For it exemplifies the view of single father as parent that *Kramer vs. Kramer* offers, and it keeps us from the kinds of questions we want to ask later on when we see Ted take a lesser paying job for the sake of

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his son, give up his weekend time, and limit his circle of friends.

- *The liberated woman is here to roam.* At the start *Kramer vs. Kramer* pays verbal homage to the idea of women's liberation. Ted's attacks on "sisterhood" are seen as a substitute for his failure to be concerned with his wife's inner life, and in one of the most confessional scenes in the film, Ted tells Billy that his mother tried to fill the role she was expected to occupy and finally became so unhappy that she had to run away. Yet the hard evidence in *Kramer vs. Kramer* is that, while liberation is here to stay, what we better get used to is that the newly liberated woman is going to do what the old chauvinistic man did. She is going to abandon her family when it interferes with her selfhood. She is going to try out new sexual partners for as long as it pleases her. She is going to expect someone else to pick up the pieces she leaves behind. When after an absence of more than a year Joanna Kramer returns to New York with a job that pays more than her husband's she assumes, without a feeling of guilt, that she has a right to claim custody of her son. The court agrees and awards Joanna custody of Billy. Only Joanna's eleventh-hour decision not to take Billy from Ted stops this tragedy from happening, but the lesson remains unchanged. In the world of the 1980s the liberated woman is here to roam, and only her sense of restraint will stop her from getting her way.

- *Separateness is best.* In almost every scene in *Kramer vs. Kramer* in which two people appear, only one is on screen at a time. Either the camera shifts back and forth, focusing on whoever is talking, or it is positioned behind the head of whoever is listening. Such camera work would seem to suggest an ironic perspective on the distances between people. But as *Kramer vs. Kramer* progresses we see that, for the adults in the film, separateness is far preferable to closeness. Without Joanna, Ted changes from an ambitious careerist to a caring father, and without Ted, Joanna changes from a frustrated housewife to an independent woman with a career. The film has a happy ending precisely because neither Kramer wants reconciliation, and we see that in the world the Kramers inhabit decency, tenderness, consideration are all possible provided they are not burdened by the kind of relationships in which complexity and day-to-day sharing are integral demands. What was initially a trauma for the Kramers—separation—thus turns out to be a stepping stone to the most desirable state of all—separateness.

- *The postmarital family works.* By virtue of the whopping fee Ted's lawyer charges, we learn how costly a child-custody battle can be. What we never see in *Kramer vs. Kramer* is that the emotional costs of divorce can also be prohibitively expensive. While the first half of *Kramer vs. Kramer* revolves around Ted's domestic gaffs and insensitivity to Billy, it never goes deeply enough to undermine the happiness that follows when Ted and Billy adjust to each other. Indeed, by mid-film the two of them are a senior-junior version of Neil Simon's "odd couple." They thrive on silent breakfasts, on not bugging each other about little things (neither flushes the toilet in the morning), and when they want to, they can even cook together. What is more, it is not just Ted and Billy who thrive as a postmarital family. The same is true of Ted's divorced neighbor, Margaret (Jane Alexander), who, despite her own children, always is free to give advice and spend time in the Park. When Ted thinks of the future, he asks Margaret if she would take care of Billy in case he died, and without a moment's hesitation she says yes (to those who have mastered separation, one more child is clearly a minor burden). What is missing in this picture of the happy postmarital family is, of course, the obvious: Billy's perspective on divorce. From time to time we see him sulk and cry. We even learn that he believes his misbehavior has driven his mother away. But *Kramer vs. Kramer* never lets Billy's perspective control matters. It is always the adult's perspective that prevails and the child's point of view that gets set aside. By the film's end the postmarital family emerges not only as a viable alternative but as an alternative that carries with it an added bonus: it promises a setting in which conflict can be limited to those resolvable battles that any parent has with a growing child.

Were *Kramer vs. Kramer* being marketed as a comedy, such a reductive view of middle-class life would, of course, make sense. How else to milk laughs from single parenthood, women's liberation, the broken family? But in the soap opera world that gives *Kramer vs. Kramer* its tone, sentimentality, not comedy, is the ultimate coin of the realm, and for this reason what is so "entertaining" and trivializing in a picture as successful as *Kramer vs. Kramer* is ominous for what it says about the 1980s. For the view of urban middle-class life that *Kramer vs. Kramer* relies on to give it appeal rests on the assumption that we have reached a point where the diminished public expectations of the last decade now have their equivalent in diminished private expectations. □

For the idea of male soap opera, I am indebted to Professor William Park of Sarah Lawrence College, who let me borrow from a talk he gave on *Kramer vs. Kramer*.

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Henry Pachter

The Spirit of Utopia

UTOPIAN THOUGHT IN THE WESTERN WORLD, by Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 896 pp. $19.95.

"It is neither probable nor desirable that kings should be philosophers, because the possession of power ruins the free use of reason." — *Immanuel Kant*

Utopia seems deader than a doornail—no better proof than the recent long academic monographs about its history. Yet, the spirit of utopia erupts again and again in the least expected places. While we are sophisticated to the point of scorning those fantastic dreams of universal goodness and gratification, it is precisely in the strongholds of learning that graffiti proclaim the abolition of the state, of work, of boredom and repression, or the outbreak of a new era in which Love rules supreme. Despite repeated disappointment, enthusiasts keep investing some far country with the glow of a new utopia, or some glamorous leader with the wisdom of King Utopus.

The belief in an ideal state is the product of a rejection-projection process. The utopians do not accept their alienation from the reality of the world in which they are forced to live; they reconstruct it along lines that would make it more lovable. There are those utopians who accuse the world of having strayed from the ways God intended, and those who think that God's work has to be done over. The first tend to be communitarians who withdraw from the world, with a sense of their own righteousness their main compensation; the second may become rebels whose longing for love turns into hatred and whose yearning for equality turns into a new elite rule.

At the end of their lengthy study of utopian thought the Manuels conclude that

> . . . utopian fantasies have yielded both good and evil in ample measure . . . [for whenever] the rationalist Hellenic element . . . is outweighed by frenetic millenarian enthusiasm, the fanatics of utopia to whom the vision has been revealed can lead both their foes and their followers to the holocaust. The mass suicide . . . at Jonestown (Guyana) . . . will long remain a symbol of utopian madness in action.

But the problem of the utopian dream is not the religious delirium with which it has been occasionally associated. The problem has always been how much violence has to be done to reality in order to realize the dream. Utopia results when the philosopher dreams that he is king; utopia perishes when the king thinks that he is the philosopher.

That was the lesson of Melvin Lasky's superb though tortured *Utopia and Revolution*, when he made the last tour of the place—or no place—a few years ago. His battling approach has been misunderstood and unfairly treated because he bared wounds that are ours too. No such difficulty besets the Manuels' elegantly written volume, evidently the fruit of a lifetime's dealing with the subject in the history of ideas. The landscape they show us has no battlefields but only playgrounds for amiable fools whose dreams and fantasies are seen as interesting byplays in the multibranched stream of man's consciousness; not as a monument of mankind's struggle for a better life. To the Manuels utopia may be a literary genre, a constitution for a perfect republic, a science-fiction fantasy of human survival through cosmological transformations, a state of mind, a religious Jules-Verniad into the inner life. The "latitudinarian and ecumenical conception draws its documentation from extraordinary voyages, moon-travelers' reports, fanciful descriptions of lost worlds, optimum constitutions, advice to princes, millenarian prophecies, architectural plans for ideal cities."

THE MANUELS DEAL at length with an impressive galaxy of major figures such as Plato, Aristotle, Alberti, More, Müntzer, Rabelais, Bruno, Francis Bacon, Campanella, J. V. Andreae, Comenius, Winstanley, Kilburne, Newton, Leibniz, Fénelon,

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Rousseau, Kant, Turgot, Restif de la Bretonne, de Sade, Condorcet, Godwin, Saint-Simon, Babeuf, Owen, Fourier, Diderot, Enfantin, Comte, Proudhon, Marx, Kropotkin, Freud, Teilhard de Chardin, Marcuse, Dr. Bernal, Norman Brown, and cursorily with an even greater number of minor characters.

Attentive readers may wonder what Restif de la Bretonne (inventor of a plan to organize prostitution) and de Sade do in this company. On the other hand, they may miss such titles as Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* and Anatole France's *Ile des Pingouins*; they may regret that Huxley's *Brave New World*, Zamiatin's *We*, and Orwell's *1984* receive only a brief collective, though laudatory, mention. We learn about Sancho Panza's government on Barrataria only that it was "awarded" to him; Americans may miss J. F. Cooper's utopian novel; Cabet's *Voyage to Içaria* is mentioned only where Marx quoted from it; neither the end of Goethe's *Faust II* nor his *Pedagogiçal Provinçe* is mentioned. But what the book misses in providing meaningful historical background of thought it makes up by gossip about thinkers. We are told that Francis Bacon was an "anal type," that Restif de la Bretonne was a shoe fetishist (three times), that Rousseau may have been impotent, that Fourier was interested in Lesbian women, that Comte persecuted his wife, and that Giordano Bruno regretted not having done as well with women as King Solomon, whereas Marx's views on sex were "Victorian."

Of course, authors are free to write their own books; but the reviewer has to ask what principles of inclusion and exclusion the authors have used. They have, it is true, provided a clue in their topology of utopias: these, properly so named, are reports of a strange place where people are ruled by unusual customs and laws that may be held up as models of the good life or serve as a counterfoil to criticize our own society. Distinct from utopia (no place) is u-chronia (no time), which transports us into another age, whether the regretted past or the hoped-for future. The range here is from Dante's *Paradiso* to H. G. Wells's *Time Maçhine*.

By contrast, a dys-topia is the description of a terrible state of affairs, designed either to ridicule a utopia or to satirize our own society. Examples of the latter are *Brave New World*, also *We*, and *1984*; as an inadvertent example one may cite B. F. Skinner's *Walden II*, the grim behaviorist fantasy of a totally manipulated society. Finally, these imaginary travels may not be headed for a different place or time but into the interior of the soul; this is called eu-psychia and describes the happy harmony that might be achieved not by rearranging the laws but through new mental or religious powers or with the help of inventions yet unknown. Norman Brown or Teilhard de Chardin fall into this category.

Many utopias that seem to describe a good society may also be read as eu-psychias, symbolic descriptions of the harmonious soul. The two most famous examples of all, Plato's *Republiç* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, must be so interpreted; for Thomas More may have permitted himself a pun: eu-topia, the good place, is ou-topia, no place. If this is true, *Utopia* is not a political treatise but a Christian tract. However, unlike dys-topia, there is no dys-psychia in the Manuels' topology. Yet, an obverse of eu-psychia would be needed to justify the inclusion of psycho- and sexo-anarchistic fantasies about societies where every instinct is gratified and every perversion catered to.

IF ALL FANTASIES of bliss—heavenly, terrestrial, and satanic alike—are counted, as long as their content reaches out beyond our present conception of reality, the number of published utopias exceeds 1,600. But obviously, one cannot call "utopia" every piece of writing that sounds unrealistic and disregards some law of nature or otherwise offends our sense of time and place. One must draw the line somewhere, and most people instinctively do so in their everyday use of the word "utopian." Most will agree with Karl Mannheim in calling "utopian" only those "orientations which, when they pass over into conduct, tend to shatter the order of things prevailing at the time." In other words, the utopian writer wants to change society; unlike de Sade, he is not fantasizing for fun. He writes from anger.

Implicitly, this definition excludes at least three areas to which the Manuels devote considerable attention. The first is, obviously, the private utopia, the expansion of sensibility, the religious ecstasies (insofar as they are not ideological accompaniments of social movements), and such science-fiction fantasies as Dr. Bernal's mind-boggling "fable" of the brain living without the body. For, obviously, Mannheim's "prevailing order of things" refers only to the social-political, not to the biological environment.

The second group of "utopias" that, to be precise, are something else concerns itself with the extension of knowledge. Francis Bacon chose the *form* of a utopian novel to advertise his empiricist philosophy and to plead for the organization of science, but he proposed no change in the prevailing order of things, and the experiments in his *House of Solomon* were all well within the range of science then thought possible. G. W.

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Leibniz also pleaded for organizing scientific research, but never in the form of a utopian novel. Each of the two philosophers rates a chapter in the Manuels' book, although neither, unlike Bernal or Teilhard de Chardin, anticipated the kind of scientific breakthrough that might overthrow our conception of man or of the universe. Mere extrapolations of an existing trend should not be called utopia, or we would have to multiply the number 1,600 by ten.

This leads to a third group of thinkers to whom the Manuels have devoted some of the most brilliant and fascinating chapters of their book: Diderot, Condorcet, Kant, and other philosophers who have formed our modern notions of Progress and Enlightment. They projected a future that would not be dominated by superstition and clerical taboos; they envisaged sane, rational policies (for instance, family planning), and engaged in pleasant forecasts of future progress. But it is difficult to discover utopian thought in the Encyclopedists' exuberant assumptions on the possibilities of reform.

It may be ungrateful and ungracious to deny the epithet "radical" to writers who were persecuted by church, censors, and police. Nevertheless, Condorcet's drafts of constitutions were *Girondist*: he counted on the natural and foreseeable progress of enlightment among the people. The Manuels try to make a case even for Turgot—certainly an interesting servant of progress, but a utopian? For all his reform projects (he would have liked to assure a job to everyone), he was far from having illusions about the equality of men.

Today, of course, we may consider "utopian" not only the didactic methods by which the *philosophes* hoped to prevail, but the entire set of assumptions from which they started: the innocence of man as he emerged from the creator's hand, hence the corrigibility of his aberrations and indeed his infinite perfectibility and educability, the idea of Progress in general, and the reliance of progress on reason and instruction in particular. To believe in progress, past and future, meant "to break free from the wheel" (the Manuels' felicitous phrase alludes to the cyclical view of history as it had earlier prevailed), to escape from the erratic ups and downs of fortune, from Vico's *ricorso*. A great innovation in man's outlook upon himself, one that permitted the projection of more utopias certainly, but in itself not a utopian view. On the contrary, a view that was much at one with the main current of philosophical developments from the deep pessimism of the 17th to the optimism of the 18th century—a philosophy, but not a utopia.

That optimism, however, had its utopian foundations. One was the myth of the noble savage, the purity and simplicity of primitive man, the belief in a golden age. That mankind had once been closer to its ideal image was taken as proof that it can reach this peak again. The plan to "recover" this original harmony of the real and the ideal animates all utopians from Rousseau to Kropotkin, and it certainly is much alive in the Young Hegelian writings of Moses Hess and in Marx's "early manuscripts." It still reverberates in Rosa Luxemburg's *Introduction to Economics*, where she devotes much space to "primitive communism" for the explicit purpose of showing that it proves the possibility of communism for the future too. This leads to another utopian assumption of the *philosophes* to which both anarchists and Marxists were to fall heir: the cosmopolitan faith in one rational humanity and the possibility of eternal peace—the hoped-for end phase of man's history and the beginning of the good life in a good society.

Perhaps this dream of eternal peace and of cosmopolitan man can serve to clarify further the meaning of utopia. When Kant wrote *Toward Eternal Peace*, he was not a utopian but expounded the conditions under which peace was thinkable (he was realistic enough to stipulate that no debts must be contracted for purposes of defense). By contrast, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre was a utopian. Although his famous *Projet pour rendre la paix perpétuelle* scarcely transcends the framework of the diplomatic art of his age, he gets lost immediately in constructions of new institutions: a European parliament, a senate of arbitration, a military force to discipline aggressors, uniform laws and currencies throughout Europe—to which Leibniz sagely and sadly answered that "some sinister fate always interposes betwixt man and his happiness." Yet, Leibniz and Kant each receive a chapter in the Manuels' book, while Saint-Pierre only manages to be mentioned at all because Rousseau "evaluated his papers with perspicacity."

I would like, however, to open a question that some readers might find awkward. One of the plans for a united Europe was launched by Napoleon, another by Hitler. Both obviously meant the peace of empire: Pax Romana, Pax Teutonica. The plans revealed by Albert Speer have all the silly paraphernalia of classical utopias: meticulously designed hierarchies and command chains, grandiose architectural plans for the capital, huge construction schemes where the helots do useful work and don't think of freedom. Hitler's utopia provided for a division of roles: contented and obedient state slaves on the one hand; on the other, continuation of a warrior race that would do the

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thinking and enjoying for the others, just as they do in Plato's *Republic*. Similar ideas can be found in Stefan George's *Seventh Ring* and in Spengler's *Prussian Socialism*.

The idea that fascists also can have utopian thoughts is somehow chilling and repugnant. For good reason, utopias are usually thought of as a leftish vice because they must make assumptions about human nature that are normally found only on the left: that man is rational, perfectible, inclined to be peaceful if given a chance, and capable of brotherly love or at least of benevolence, or that wise institutions can cure him of his competitive and belligerent instincts. A fundamental change of human nature as we know it is a necessary condition of utopian harmony.

SINCE THE MANUELS DEAL with their utopians *seriatim*, they are unable to discuss problems systematically and comparatively. Yet the basic question of utopianism, its validity and usefulness, can be answered only by comparing the solutions that different utopians have suggested in the course of history: What assumptions on human nature are necessary to make utopia plausible? How fundamental are the changes that are supposed to convert the "real" into an "ideal" society, and what is the relationship of the real and the ideal? Does the ideal merely serve as a yardstick, or is a conversion possible? To qualify as utopian, must a plan simply transcend the given framework or does it require a break?

The desire to break away from the customary frame of reference may be the decisive characteristic of the utopian. The Manuels rightly include in their survey Thomas Müntzer and Georges Sorel, although neither wrote a utopia, and Sorel despised utopians. Both cherished what might be called "open" utopias. Like Marx, they were confident that the expected apocalypse would lead to a fundamental change whose details did not need to be spelled out. But we must make a distinction: Müntzer was convinced that man is good, and he trusted that Paradise can be regained if everybody is free; Sorel did not have such basic trust, nor did he think that man is good. Sorel used the revolution only as a myth, and he would have been most unhappy to find himself in a society without combat.

For Marx, on the other hand, we might claim status among the utopians. Not so much because of his utopian slogan—which the Manuels keep calling his "banderole": "From Each According to His Faculties, to Each According to His Needs"—but because he did believe that the revolution would reconcile individual and community, subject and object, freedom and necessity, want and work: "Only in community will personal freedom become possible."

There is merit in returning to the utopian sources of Marx, and the Manuels are certainly right in tracing his inspiration back to Saint-Simon. But then one should expect them to proceed to the inevitable second part of the story: how did this revolutionary, utopian theory become first the ideology of a movement that was not utopian at all, and later the philosophy of a state that is a veritable counter-utopia? Instead, we are told that "half of the globe's population is hovering between phase I and phase II of communism. . . ."[1]

The misunderstanding is at the bottom of my serious reservations about this book. Since the Manuels consider every extrapolation of scientific progress as a valid utopia, they have no difficulty in relating Marx to Saint-Simon's gospel of inventiveness and industry, the vision of virtual abundance that would introduce the distributive economy. They even ascribe to Marx a "bold fantasizing . . . in a passage where he foresaw technological progress reaching a high level—virtual automation—that man's relation to the machine would become purely intellectual-scientific guidance. Total technology is the ineradicable signature of the Marxian utopia."

Unfortunately, the Manuels never give references for the "passages" or "some scholars" they allude to,[2] but I think the "passage" in question is in *Grundrisse* (Europa Verlag, p. 592), where Marx indeed speaks of "labor no longer part of the production process but man merely its regulator and guard." This passage, however, occurs not in the context of utopian prospects (such as the abolition of the law of value, which really mattered to Marx), but serves only to illustrate "the contradictions between the foundations of capitalist production and their development" (this is the subheading of the page, and there can be no question of "fantasizing"). The Manuels

[1] The Manuels here refer to the two phases Marx outlines in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*. Phase I is that of socialism, when people are still rewarded according to their deserts; phase II is that of communism, when the utopian "banderole" has been realized.

[2] It is surprising to find in a volume of this scope so few references to methodological discussion, the history of ideas, and the work of other scholars. The bibliography is sparse; it eschews, e.g., the works of J. L. Talmon and Gershom Scholem. On the other hand, I find it strange that the authors say they have "drawn on" their earlier book whereas they have taken 300 pages verbatim from it.

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misunderstand Marx: abundance only makes socialism *possible*; it is not identical with a distributive economy. The Marxian utopia consists in the abolition of the law of value and of private property; of this Saint-Simon does not breathe a word.

I also find other "passages" suggesting that the Manuels are perhaps less familiar with Marxist than with 18th-century writers. For instance, they assume that under socialism the worker gets back the full value of his input—though Marx takes many pages to refute this precisely in the *Critique* from which the Manuels quoted earlier. The *Critique*, however, was a private letter, not meant for publication and of limited scope. Marx's real commitment to utopia must be found in the early writings where he deals with the liberation of "species man" and all his faculties. Marx never proposed to liberate "labor"; his aim was to restore man's creative genius to its rightful place. In that he relied on Friedrich Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, where the identity of work and play is first discovered, and on the writings of Fourier, whom Engels also praised, especially in the *Anti-Dühring*, for his criticism of bourgeois sexual morality. One knows that Fourier proposed to use people's natural inclinations to make work pleasant; Marx and Engels found the idea splendid but in need of a more philosophical foundation.

It is therefore strange to read in the Manuels' book that Herbert Marcuse "was aware that Marx had been reluctant to see work as play; the new utopia [Marcuse's liberation of Eros] was destined to transcend him and to revive the Fourierist ideal that Marx had condemned." In *The Holy Family*, Marx made use of Fourier's ideas, but turned them around: "If man forms himself through his sensuality then the empirical world must be so constructed that he finds in it that which is truly human." Unlike Schiller, Marx did not *compare* work with play but sought a society in which both work and play would be the natural expression of man's creative powers so that the distinction would indeed disappear.

The problem is not the rehabilitation of play. As Marcuse himself discovered, increased opportunities for gratification have reinforced, rather than weakened, the hold of the existing class structure on its citizens. The problem is, as Marcuse knew in his pre-utopian phase, how to make the world more rational.

ADMITTEDLY, there are two basic kinds of utopias: from the one Marcuse took the title of his first book, *Reason and Revolution*; from the other he fashioned his later proclamation of the revolution of unreason. The one kind places before humanity the next tasks we must tackle; the other paints in great detail a land of Cockaigne,[3] and invites us to jump into it right now. The one kind addresses itself to social evils or to evils that can be attributed to social, political, and economic unreason; the other promises personal happiness and bliss, or even salvation, to its believers. The utopian ideal of More, of Owen, of Marx was compatible with the assumption that men would still have to work, not only to feed, clothe and house themselves but also to educate themselves, to become a better community and to satisfy the higher aspirations of mankind. In an age when so many utopias—the liberal, the socialist, the internationalist, the nationalist, the religious—have been shipwrecked it may be comprehensible that utopias of a new kind, more fantastic than ever, are being offered. But what we need, if a paradox be permitted, are realistic utopias, projections that can and must be realized to assure peace, sanity, security to all. □

[3] The reference is to "the land of cakes," where the rivers are wine, and roasted chickens fly into folks' mouths—a 13th-century satire on monasteries.

Elizabeth Kamarck Minnich

Coping with Goodness

LEST INNOCENT BLOOD BE SHED: THE STORY OF THE VILLAGE OF LE CHAMBON AND HOW GOODNESS HAPPENED THERE, by Philip Hallie. New York: Harper & Row, 304 pp. $12.95.

We recently have been subject to an increase of disaster books on World War II. Not accidentally, I am afraid, the Holocaust shelves now appearing in bookstores are often right next to those offering popular sex guides, books on astrology, exhortations to increased self-assertion. History books on the war years, kept separate, attract far fewer browsers. Unflattering mirror that they are, our bookstores show us not only how powerful but how acceptable, as well as profitable, is our craving for something extreme. These disaster books, like the disaster movies that have been breaking

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attendance records, also reveal just how powerless we feel. What is frightening about this realization is how readily we seem to turn to an almost voluptuous submission to violence, as if, in seeking out stories of horror, we celebrate the force we lack yet crave.

Fortunately, every once in a while a different kind of book appears. Philip Hallie's *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* is such a book. It cannot be read calmly, but still less can it be read in a spirit of submission to or celebration of horror. Hallie tells us:

> One afternoon I was reading some documents relating to Adolf Hitler's twelve-year empire. It was not the politics of these years that was at the center of my concern; it was the cruelty perpetrated in the death camps of Central Europe. For years, I had been studying cruelty, the slow crushing and grinding of a human being by other human beings.

The price of such study is high, and Hallie is honest about it. He speaks of learning to hate, of feeling the passion to destroy, and of his own despair at finding these desires in himself. He also is honest about something much harder to admit: before endless repetitions of horrors, one human reaction is boredom. Hallie calls it "horrified indifference," and the "horrified" applies to his feeling about himself. He realizes that one result of being a student of cruelty is to become unable to feel either outrage or compassion spontaneously—and then to fear for the health of one's heart.

But what Hallie calls "obsession" with his subject seems to be closer to a strong person's refusal to submit to what cannot be mastered. Such a refusal can lead to what Karl Jaspers (another philosopher who thought through his horror) called "metaphysical guilt." It is the guilt of innocent survivors, of those who live when others have died. And it is a terribly painful and persistent guilt because, since nothing was done, neither expiation nor forgiveness is possible. Some people try to cure themselves of their feeling of guilt, as if it were an illness. Jaspers and Hallie live with it and accept it as a reminder that we are all involved in and responsible for our world, that being human means being implicated not only in humaneness but in humanity. They do not try to rid themselves of the pain of their care.

WHAT HALLIE FOUND in the story of the villagers of Le Chambon, a small village isolated on a high plateau in southern France, is the other side of the horror of a world gone wrong. The Chambonnais quietly and firmly resisted Marshall Pétain's measures of cooperation with the occupying Nazis, and just as firmly resisted the Nazis when they moved south. Led, but not surpassed, by their pastor and his wife, André and Magda Trocmé, they took in the refugees who came to the village, hid them against the "rafles" (roundups) of Jews, and helped them flee across the border into Switzerland. When the pastor, his assistant, and the local schoolmaster were arrested and sent to a detention camp, the villagers carried on their work without leaders. And the leaders continued their work without their supporting community, too: they organized Protestant services in the camp where they preached nonviolent resistance to a growing congregation.

Why these people were able to stand against the order of the day is, of course, a question one must ask. Hallie does not know why they were not treated more harshly than they were—why, for example, the leaders were released from the camp even after refusing to sign the required loyalty oath. He cannot know why the whole village was not rounded up or razed; but he does try to provide some clues as to why the people themselves acted as they did.

Le Chambon is an isolated village that for centuries has been a home for Protestants in largely Catholic France. These people are no strangers to oppression, or to resistance to orders of the state. Perhaps they had less trouble than some in being able to believe what was happening. Furthermore, one-third of the villagers were Darbyists, members of a radical sect so antiestablishment they will not even attend services. Although these people did not hear Pastor Trocmé preach, they found his ways compatible with their own, and they stood with him from the beginning.

Pastor André Trocmé was a passionate, intellectual man, the scion of a wealthy and powerful family. Trocmé, whose mother died in an accident for which his father had felt responsible, believed he had a personal battle to fight against death. To do no harm became his guiding purpose. With an old friend from his university days, Edouard Theis, Trocmé founded a school, the Cévenol, in Le Chambon. The school offered the usual academic subjects; it also taught nonviolence. Trocmé had also learned young that nonviolence must be practiced and must be *on time*, a phrase Hallie repeats throughout his story. The pastor knew that you cannot wait for a battle and then ask your troops to lay down their arms. The students and the villagers in Le Chambon received training before anyone knew how much it would be needed.

There also was Magda Trocmé, who said of herself:

> I try not to hunt around to find people to help. But I never close my door, never refuse to help somebody

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who comes to me and asks for something. This, I think, is my kind of religion. You see, it is a way of handling myself.

Her sense of helping as necessary to her, for herself, struck Hallie as harder to understand than her husband's passionate commitment cast in the terms of his faith. And she startled him more when she said, "You know? Saving refugees was a *hobby* for the people of Le Chambon! Oh, yes!" Her understanding of the work necessary simply to be a good person and her pleasure in the modesty of the villagers who did well must, however, have helped the villagers to understand and learn to live by the preachings of their pastor. She and they knew what it takes to get on with a hard life.

THROUGHOUT THE STORY of the Chambonnais I was reminded of one of Albert Camus's characters, Grand, who, when praised for his courage in risking contamination to help out during the plague, responds, "Plague is here, and we've got to make a stand, that's obvious. Ah, I only wish everything was as simple." It is interesting to discover in Hallie's book that Camus spent several months living close to Le Chambon before he wrote *The Plague*. In *The Plague*, the priest, who thinks he must accept God's will to be a good man, and the atheist, who wants to be a saint without God, die; but Grand lives. Camus seems to have learned that the simple life that prepares one for the worst of times requires *unself-conscious*, immediate caring. Grand says, "One must help a neighbor, of course," and when they saw refugees on their doorstep, the Chambonnais said only—in Magda's words—"Come in, and come in." Asked why they were willing to risk so much for strangers, they answered, "Where else could they go?" Their questions, like their answers, were very simple.

Of course, it helped the villagers that they were isolated, a fact that Hallie does not emphasize. The first few acts of resistance were small ones. They refused to set up a flag to be saluted by the students at the Cévenol, but allowed those who wanted to salute to do so by facing across the road toward the public school flag. No official knew. The villagers had the chance to see that resistance of some kind was possible—and to feel how good it is. I do not mean to belittle their courage. Many would have refused under the eyes of the Marshall. But initially all did not join in and, without the space and time their isolation gave them, would not have seen how the others had succeeded.

Another clue is that this was, in Hallie's phrase, a "kitchen struggle." It "began and ended in the privacy of people's homes," and "decisions that were turning points in the struggle took place in kitchens and not only with male leaders as the only decision-makers but often with women centrally involved." The resistance of Le Chambon was not that of followers but of equal participants dealing directly with pressing realities. Their strength shows what happens when we are able to overcome false dignities.

It is sad but true that we must also learn that Pastor Trocmé ended by ruling "with a rod," as one villager put it. The great man who had learned to live simply, to work *with* people, learned during the war that he could lead, and learned what power felt like. He went off to work with organizations, to take a bigger place. But a story of perfection is not what we need if we are, with Hallie, to learn to accept the goodness of real people.

Finally, I must confess that I was a little embarrassed by Hallie's passionate self-identification with the people of whom he writes. It is their story, after all, and in his fervor he seems at times to betray their modesty, and his own. People who practice goodness as a "hobby" for self-improvement, who do not seek out people to help but simply do not fail to help those who need them would surely avoid the claim to membership in a kind of mystic community with which Hallie closes his book. And it threatens, at that point, to be his book, not theirs.

I understand his passion, but it makes me worry that we, the readers, may also join in and too quickly say with relief, "Ah. That is how I would have acted." It is because we cannot know how we would act that we must, like Magda, work at it. Self-flagellation may not help us prepare to be good, but neither do rushes of moral fervor and their aftermath, self-congratulation.

Still, it is a deep relief to meet the Chambonnais. Hallie will not be the only one who has cried over their story. This book asks that we neither submit to horror nor glorify it, that we neither flee from nor glorify goodness, but that we take them both seriously. It shows us a way to handle ourselves. The question is whether we will. □

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Irwin Stark

The American Dilemma Revisited

RULES AND RACIAL EQUALITY, by Edwin Dorn. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 155 pp. $14.00.

More than a century after the Civil War amendments and despite decades of legislation, Supreme Court decisions and affirmative action programs, racial equality remains unfinished business. The violence attendant on school busing for integration, the burning of suburban homes occupied by blacks who have liberated themselves from inner-city slums, the shocking rate of black unemployment, and the huge differential that persists between the income of black and white families should remind us that the solution of the problem is still elusive.

Significant progress has of course been made. The more overt forms of social discrimination have been visibly modified if not eliminated; but if blacks today are better off than they were 30 years ago, there is little evidence that they are narrowing the distance separating them from their white counterparts. The gap between black male earnings and white male earnings grew from approximately $1,000 in 1947 to $3,000 in 1975. On the average, black families now have less than one-fifth the total wealth accumulation and at each income level less than one-half the wealth of white families. If there have been dramatic increases in the number of blacks completing college, a jump from 4.1 percent in 1960 to 8.1 percent in 1974, the corresponding jump for whites has been from 11.9 percent to 21.0 percent. Although blacks are today more prominent in political life than at any time since Reconstruction, they nevertheless make up less than 1 percent of all elected officials in the country. Racial inequality hasn't gone away.

WHY, THEN, HAS THE PROBLEM proved so intractable? Edwin Dorn's *Rules and Racial Equality* offers an answer that should come as no surprise to civil libertarians. The merit of this study lies in viewing the subject from a somewhat novel angle.

Dorn's theoretical argument, summarized too briefly here to do it full justice, begins with an analysis of the classic American approach, the drive toward the goal of equal opportunity. This approach seems to be logical: if unequal treatment produces unequal results, equalizing treatment will equalize results. But it ain't necessarily so, Dorn contends. For "rules"—laws, regulations, judicial decisions—are either "open" or "closed." An open rule implies no substantive result, whereas a closed rule implies a rather specific result or set of results. It is one thing, for instance, to say that "Every person over 65 is *eligible* for social security benefits" (an open rule) and quite another to say that "Every person over 65 *will receive* social security benefits" (a closed rule). Rules about rights—the right to vote, the right of free speech, the right to a trial by jury—tend to be closed; everyone can be given these rights and can generally exercise them. But what of the rule governing equal opportunity—equal housing, for example, or equal employment opportunity? There would be no serious problem were such goods in abundant supply. Unfortunately, however, where large groups are compelled to compete for marginal allocations—good housing and desirable jobs—the rule is in effect an open one. "In our society," Dorn writes, "large amounts of goods are not subject to the rule of equal opportunity." This is the crux of the problem. "The American view of equality is of a special sort; it looks to equality of rules, not to equality of results."

This concept of equal opportunity may have worked to some extent for earlier immigrant groups. Indeed, critics of affirmative action frequently cite the upward mobility of such groups and ask why blacks cannot succeed today without governmental intervention. Defenders of affirmative action respond that even if we assume that there is some truth in the Horatio Alger myth, conditions have changed drastically since the 19th and early 20th century. There are no longer frontiers to be settled or cities to be built; economic growth has slowed considerably and "wage competition among individuals has been replaced by job competition replete with credentialism, union perquisites and highly institutionalized hiring procedures." Moreover, white workers because they were white were favored over native black workers. Nor was this discriminatory practice confined to employers. In 1862, longshoremen forced the dismissal of all blacks from the New York docks. "In a society permeated by racial discrimination," writes Dorn, "it makes no sense to say that one group suffers discrimination while another group receives equal treatment. If one group is discriminated *against*, the other group is discriminated *for*." What makes com-

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plaints about reverse discrimination so specious, he adds, is that "historically there has been systematic discrimination in favor of whites."

But the fatal flaw in the equal-opportunity concept is that it can work under only one condition—that the races are substantially equal at the time the rule is imposed. If the groups start out unequal, the equal-opportunity concept will merely perpetuate inequality. Given two contestants in the hundred-yard dash, one white, fast and fit, the other black, fast and suffering from a pulled muscle, though they set out from the identical starting line, there can hardly be a question about the finish.

I assume this to be the basis for Dorn's rather grudging support of affirmative action. Since it "intends at most to ensure weak equal opportunity . . . [it] will at best lead to ambiguous change in the standing of the races. It is ironic that such controversy surrounds policies that promise so little." Thus, the "inexorable" conclusion Dorn arrives at is that "a period of compensatory inequality is required." He calls for giving employers incentives to hire economic marginals, asks that no policy be enacted that has a disequalizing effect, and he believes that seniority systems, the closed shop, and tenure diminish competition (especially between whites and qualified blacks) and should therefore be eliminated.

In the pursuit of genuine racial equality this may be a theoretically inexorable conclusion even if we grant, which I do not, that seniority, the closed shop, and tenure are expendable protections. The difficulty, perhaps insurmountable in our society, is that compensatory inequality demands of whites an altruism that is simply unrealistic to expect. If affirmative action programs that do not unduly disturb traditional job safeguards have aroused such vehement public opposition, it does seem quixotic to propose that government incur the wrath of segments of the community that have at least moved some distance toward rectifying a historical injustice for which in any case they do not feel personally culpable. Instead, I suspect that white Americans will continue to muddle through, devising and accepting whatever schemes will help alleviate the problem short of seriously compromising their own economic interests. They will, I am afraid, continue to pay sincere homage to the principle of racial equality while steadfastly insisting on being more equal.

Still, there is much to be said for quixoticism when it reminds us, as Mr. Dorn does here, how deeply the prolongation of racial inequality gashes the fabric of our democratic pretensions. □

Harold Nassau

Uncertain Lessons of Appeasement

MUNICH: THE PRICE OF PEACE, by Telford Taylor. New York: Doubleday. 1004 pp. $17.50.

When statesmen face world crises, they often tell us that their decisions are based on information the rest of us lack. Crises pass, archives close, and sometimes we forget to look back to count the change from the bill that has been paid. Telford Taylor, who teaches at the Columbia and Benjamin Cardozo law schools, has taken advantage of reopened archives to examine what passed for currency during the Munich crisis of 1938. Delving into the papers of the British cabinet, military staff documents, and a wealth of diaries, Taylor has recreated in remarkable detail the political and diplomatic events leading up to war in Europe. He tells us what the leaders knew, when they knew it, and, most interesting, what they could have known had they wanted to. He rightly concludes that the information, if not the will, for sounder decisions was readily at hand: Britain and France would have been far better served by fighting alongside Czechoslovakia in 1938 than without it in 1939.

Within this field of interest, Taylor's *Munich* is by far the most complete study we have. Balanced and extensive, it supersedes older works. There are limitations. It does not offer any dramatically new reading of events. It fails to deal with some important issues. And the historical lesson about appeasement raises some thorny questions of ideology and historical perspective. But what Taylor does, he does exceedingly well.

With his great talent in law and military intelligence, Taylor, the chief prosecutor at the Nuremburg war crimes trial, now puts the past on trial. Chamberlain is introduced as a "dominant and domineering man profoundly convinced of the rightness of his judgments." Hitler is often vacillating and unsure even though "demonic," "satanic," and "infernal." Although Taylor admits that nothing significant was settled at Munich, he adopts it as his point of reference because it highlighted the intertwined destinies of Chamberlain and Hitler and so, Taylor states, "This is a book about these two men."

THE DRAMATIC QUALITY of this view of history is heightened by Taylor's tactic of beginning his narrative at the end of the story, the actual

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conference in 1938, and then flashing back to the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, working quickly through the '20s, and meticulously through the '30s. This gives the narrative somewhat the air of fate surrounding a classical tragedy: Chamberlain the tragically flawed hero, Hitler his nemesis. Both men, in different ways, put more faith in themselves than in their military intelligence and so made decisions based more on personal hopes than military reality.

In assessing the failures of Neville Chamberlain and Stanley Baldwin, Taylor defends Baldwin. He notes that Baldwin "initiated the first system for survey of Britain's military needs," while Chamberlain questioned the "assumption that Britain must be prepared to fight." He contrasts Chamberlain's gullibility about German intentions with Baldwin's belief that the 1935 Naval Accord could act as a gauge: if Germany stayed within the agreed limits, well and good. If not, then Britain would know what it was up against. Chamberlain consistently ignored military intelligence, or bent it to other uses. When, during the Munich crisis, the British cabinet considered Czechoslovakia's capacity and will to resist, Chamberlain ignored the favorable report of the well-informed military attaché and accepted a gloomy assessment by Colonel Mason-MacFarlane who had merely driven to Prague, at night, to deliver a message to Beněs. "They did not want encouraging news," Taylor concludes, "they wanted news which would justify capitulation."

Hitler, according to Taylor, could have been dissuaded from war by a strong show by the democracies, even at a very late date. Taylor admirably reconstructs the 1937 "Hossbach Conference," at which Hitler and his military and economic leaders discussed the possibility of war. The confrontation between the moderate generals, Blomberg and Fritsch, and the bellicose Göring eventually led Hitler to make himself commander-in-chief. William Shirer and Walter Görlitz have suggested that Hitler committed himself to war at this meeting. A. J. P. Taylor viewed it as an attempt to consolidate preparations for war by getting rid of such conservatives as Dr. Schacht who were not moving fast enough. Our author submits that with the diatribe about *Lebensraum* and a military solution, "Hitler—the Hitler of *Mein Kampf*—finally spoke." Even so, there was no decision to go to war. Taylor's conclusion rings true that Hitler's views comprised no more than a "strategic orientation" to accept war if necessary. Moderates were already on the way out, and Hitler wavered too often for us to accept the contention that this conference had to lead ineluctably to war. By summer 1938, however, matters had changed. When General Adam confronted Hitler with the fact that his forces could not conceivably halt a French invasion while Germany invaded Czechoslovakia, Hitler replied, "We have no time to listen to this stuff. You understand nothing."

Taylor's analysis of the "Halder Plot" against Hitler by members of the general staff is incisive. A number of high officers, believing that Hitler was leading the nation into premature confrontation with Britain and France, planned to seize power if Hitler undertook war in 1938. The coup never took place—Hitler's triumph at Munich pulled the rug from under the doubting generals. Taylor looks at the plotters' commands rather than their titles and concludes that the plan cannot be deemed a real threat. Perhaps, however, not all the significance of the plot should be measured by its chances of success.

Although Taylor expends much time meting out justice to individuals, the hinges on which this book turn are discussions of military strategy and strength. The critical event was the remilitarization of the Rhineland—knocking the pins out from under the policy of collective security. The effectiveness of the French system of alliances with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia depended on France's ability to attack Germany if Germany marched east. So long as the Rhineland was demilitarized, France could strike decisively in the Ruhr industrial area. Once Nazi Germany put troops on the west bank of the Rhine, France's strategic superiority appeared to vanish. Taylor shows that France's failure to act in 1936 did eventually lead to the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939. Finally, Taylor argues that the optimal time for Britain and France to have moved against the fascists had been during the Ethiopian crisis of 1935. But this is hardly news—Churchill offered us this view 30 years ago.

This brings us to the limitation of Taylor's book. His goal is to teach us "not a new lesson, but a great one": Munich is a "valid symbol of the dangers of not facing up to unpleasant realities." Fair enough. But underlying this sound advice is the assumption that historical reality is like a bedrock that a statesman or researcher will know by the solid clank it makes against his shovel. The question, obviously, is not whether we should face up to realities, but *which* realities to face up to. Skirting the issue of whether history can teach policy lessons, we can at least demand of a historian who would teach us a lesson that he either state the general case or draw precise analogies. Taylor does neither.

The components of Taylor's historical reality are twofold: character of leadership and military

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preparedness. Doubtless, by 1938 these had become the primary realities. Taylor acutely observes that when Chamberlain reported to the cabinet on the Godesberg talks, just before Munich, he defended appeasement in general and then added, as an aside, "If we now possessed a superior force to Germany we should probably be considering these proposals in a very different spirit." Appeasement, however, had not been conceived as a way of pacifying a ruthless, insatiable power. Appeasement politics gained credibility because they derived, in part, from Britain's long tradition of seeking a balance of power in Europe. Indeed, Martin Gilbert has traced appeasement back to John Bright's resistance to the Crimean War—while Taylor starts with Britain's revulsion against World War I. Taylor is constantly astonished by the short-sightedness and gullibility of the appeasers. Perhaps the real surprise was, as N. H. Gibbs remarked, Britain's total reversal of policy only six months after Munich.

IN THIS BROADER VIEW of appeasement, other "realities" emerge. Economic question cannot be ignored. British economic interests had long been willing to recognize Germany's dominance in Central Europe so long as British interests in the Balkans and Romania were safeguarded. Taylor ends his history with Chamberlain's turn after the fall of Prague, but it is interesting to note that German and British officials met in January 1939 to divide up the world coal trade, and as late as July 1939 there was still talk of a billion-pound British loan to their best customer—Germany. Even if Taylor is correct in viewing these factors as irrelevant to Munich, they are certainly a part of the historical lesson of appeasement that Taylor would teach. But such factors have no place in Taylor's history.

Nor does Taylor make any effort to relate the leaders to the society in which they acted. The reader gets no hint that the term "collective security" had become so much a catchword of British party politics that by the mid-'30s it had lost its credibility. British public opinion opposed the war; the nations of the Empire were not ready to fight for Czechoslovakia; France would not fight at all; and not a few in the West viewed appeasement as preferable to alliance with the Soviet Union. These factors also get short shrift from Taylor. By the same token, Hitler's alliance with the Rhineland industrialists and the Junkers, which Taylor finds "extraordinary," is less astonishing to a student of social history: Barrington Moore pointed out 15 years ago that "fascism developed most fully in Germany where capitalist industrialist growth had gone furthest within the framework of a conservative revolution from above."

"Appeasement" is one of the most provocative words in our political vocabulary. Its meanings have overflowed the borders of the event. To teach its lesson on the basis of Munich alone is, in today's world, unrealistic and, perhaps, disingenuous. To the generation that experienced World War II, appeasement evokes the bitter memory of weakness, misplaced hopes, and tragedy. It cannot fail to provoke feelings of old shame and new resolve. For people whose political point of reference is America's intervention in Vietnam, however, "appeasement" calls forth a different shame and a different resolve. It reminds them of false rationalization for the abuse of power, obsession with American preeminence, and overreaction to past experience. And it can provoke a disastrous insouciance in the face of international dangers.

Taylor himself came to oppose the war in Vietnam—primarily on the grounds that it could not be won within acceptable political and moral terms. In his discussion of Munich, as in his analysis of Vietnam, he is content to assign individual responsibility and he is silent on the underlying question of just which national interests were at stake. Once the issue becomes national survival, as at Munich, the question need not be asked. So Taylor's account is a worthwhile reminder, especially to the younger generation, of other ways in which leaders and nations delude themselves—and of the cost. But 40 years after the event we should come to terms with causes as well as with consequences. It is not enough to learn the lesson of Munich: we must learn when to apply it. □

Russian Thought

A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN THOUGHT FROM THE ENLIGHTENMENT TO MARXISM by Andrzej Walicki. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 456 pp. $25.

The forcible super-imposition of Marxism as the orthodoxy of the Soviet state obliterated, for some three generations, the spontaneity of Russian thought, creating the unfortunate image of Russians as automatons printing out quotations from Marx and Lenin. In recent years, as Marxism

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became less and less viable as a serious intellectual option for its wards, that long hidden spontaneity has reemerged, in puzzling fragments.

Andrzej Walicki's compendium of Russian prerevolutionary thought provides the background for understanding that spontaneity. Painstakingly, he compiles concise reports on the personalities and texts of that forgotten Russia. In justice to Professor Walicki, his book is rather more interesting than his subject. It would be hard to speak of a distinctly Russian philosophy in the 19th century. Not unlike American thought of the time, Russian philosophical thought tended to echo dominant European trends, Kant, Schelling, Hegel. The texts it produced are, for the most part, of a sociological rather than a philosophical interest. Russia's two major thinkers, Tolstoy and Dostoyevski, were novelists and social commentators rather than philosophers in a strict sense. In that sense, Berdyaev is an honorable exception rather than a typical representative of his time.

For all that, Russian thinkers of the prerevolutionary days did create a surprisingly rich and vital intellectual tradition and a matrix to

Stephen Roane

The Miltie Show

I have been doing a slow burn over the Miltie Show on television. With his pixielike smile you have to call him "uncle Miltie." You cannot possibly think of him as Professor Milton Friedman, Nobel Prize winner in Economics and Doyen of the extreme conservatives. But he is the theoretician of Ronnie Reagan, and all hands to the right of King Louis XIV. He has been "solving economic problems" for every right-wing Crazy from Pinochet of Chile on. Miltie walks around with a big old tome, *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith. The only time Friedman's voice gets choked up is when he mumbles incantations from his tome. It appears that "the free market" is the miraculous mechanism of Adam Smith that regulates the economy by an "unseen hand" that leaves everybody (or almost everybody) happy. Miltie thinks (he actually said this) that the great century was the nineteenth. Free enterprise was at its height. The millionaire and the beggar could each pick the bridge he wished to sleep under. Little kids of five or six could, if they so desired, put in 14 or 16 hours a day of wholesome labor.

But wasn't there terrible poverty and misery in the nineteenth? Didn't landlords freely build tenements that were slums when brand-new? Ask the Irish about the lovely nineteenth.

Around 1848 the potato blight hit Ireland. There was a famine so bad that one third of the population died, and one third emigrated. The English gentlemen in charge were greatly concerned. They were not Hitlers, they really wanted to help. But what to do? Common sense, indeed any kind of sense would indicate that they should get as many ships as possible, load them with food, and send them to Ireland to feed the people. But no; that would be *government intervention in the free market*, the worst thing. It would be unfair to the grain merchants. Famine in Ireland? Let the free market do its thing. Private traders from all over the world would ship food to Ireland. Because of this increase in supply, food prices would drop to a reasonable level. No? The trouble was, people in Ireland did not have any money to pay for food, no matter what its price. Irish landlords were actually exporting grain from Ireland to find better markets. This at a time when women and children in Ireland were dropping dead from starvation in the streets. Grown men were routing around in horse shit to find edible seeds. Oh, the free market!

WHAT ABOUT our own Great Depression of 1929, if we may leave Miltie's favorite nineteenth. Millions of people went hungry when there was a glut of food. It was strictly man-made poverty, replete with incredible misery. What happened? What about the glorious "free market"? According to Dr. Friedman it was all because of the absentmindedness of someone at the Fed. This caused the stock market to crash. But Miltie! It wasn't the stock market crash that caused the depression, but the depression that caused the crash. Wasn't it? Besides, what about all the depressions that occurred before the 1929 catastrophe? All because of absence of mind?

Oh, if only we could get rid of all this government regulation and red tape, all these fetters on the free conduct of business! Well, wait a minute. Suppose somebody manufactures a food—we will unoriginally call it "Brand X." And suppose it happens to be poison. Milton would say, "Well, so what? The free market will take care. After a while people will start dying from Brand X, others won't buy it any more, and it will go out of business." But sometimes it takes 10 or 15 years for people to die. By that time, if the owner hasn't made enough to buy a gambling casino, he simply makes a new product "Brand Y," with the same stuff, and sells it again. Nowadays government bureaucrats can examine Brand X, and determine that it is poison when only a few people have died, instead of a lot of people having to die.

The trouble is, the marketplace has this unfortunate tendency to do a little cheating and thieving and conniving (even Dr. Friedman admits that).

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which thoughtful Russians still turn when they seek relief from the stilted sterility of Marxism. The "dissidents"—the Russian term actually means "those who think in other ways"—did not spring from thin air. Nor are they primarily critics of the official Marxism. They are, rather, revitalizing an older tradition. To understand them we need some understanding of the intellectual matrix from which they spring.

That matrix has long been inaccessible to the English reader. The sole work covering the field, T. G. Masaryk's *The Spirit of Russia*, is excellent, but it is more than four score years old and bears signs of age. Andrzej Walicki has covered the same ground with the advantage of scholarship and the perspective of years. His translator has served him well: only rarely does the reader note that he is reading a translation. While not exactly a book the general reader would want to keep by his bedside, this is a most valuable reference work and should find its place on every library shelf next to Masaryk's *Spirit of Russia*.

—E. K. □

People out to make money are not always so particular, especially if they're a corporation and not a person at all. There is no "noblesse" in the free market, and therefore no "noblesse oblige." Adam Smith's citizens could tell the difference between a good or bad pair of shoes. The choice could be left to them. Even nowadays anyone can tell a good soda from a bad one. But we live in a technological age. How do you or I or Dr. Friedman know whether our food is poisoned, or the advertisements are phony, or our airplanes reasonably safe? Somebody has to take care. The world is much more complicated, and the average citizen simply does not have the knowledge to make the vital market decisions.

It gradually impinges that Milton wants to starve a lot of people to solve our economic problems. Let the workers suffer a little. It will do them good. "Look," says Milton, "let's just do away with all this nonsense of unemployment insurance, and welfare, and stuff. Then people would *have* to go out and get jobs. All right, they wouldn't be the best jobs, or very high-paying jobs, but the people would work." (He actually said this, I have to keep repeating that.) At the same time Friedman advocates free international trade. Let the underdeveloped nations export goods to us, and we will buy the goods, if they can make them cheaper. Well, sure they can make them cheaper. Because in these underdeveloped countries, hungry people can be found who will work for abysmally low wages, and impossible hours and working conditions. (This is no joke, this is a slow horrible death.) If we just import their products it will simply eradicate the corresponding industries in our own country, and throw masses of people out of work.

By the way, it is interesting to note that many of the factories in the underdeveloped countries are built by owners from our country, with profits they made here. They then import the products of these factories into our own country. It makes them "more competitive." In other words, they want to take advantage of the sweatshop labor in the underdeveloped countries. In the meantime, while masses of our workers are being thrown out of work, Dr. Friedman is busy removing such bureaucratic roadblocks as unemployment insurance and welfare. So lots of workers and their families will starve. When they starve enough, they will go back to work under conditions that will make domestic production once again competitive, and they will be working for the same wages and conditions as the foreign workers who captured the business for "their" capitalists. But that's not exactly what we wanted to do. We didn't want to lower our standard of living to that of the workers in Sri Lanka or Hong Kong, but to raise their standard of living to our levels. At least that's what us bleeding-heart liberals wanted to do. On the other hand, what Milton would have is a competition between our workers and those of the underdeveloped countries, which would result in the lowest possible standard of living for both groups. A standard only sufficient to keep them alive, and raise enough children to provide future workers. That is the blessing of the "free market."

THE "FREE MARKET" is largely a myth. Between gourmet restaurants and clothing boutiques, competition does exist. And they should remain free and competitive. But between U.S. Steel and Bethlehem? Large-scale modern enterprise generally requires too much capital for the unrestricted entry into the business required for the even partial working of Adam Smith's scheme. The number of companies remains severely limited. Demand is frequently unalterable (as with wheat or oil) and free competition becomes a fiction.

Finally, the question must be asked, "Is the free market, and the most profitable activity, the best way to determine what we should do with our resources?" You make more money building office buildings than building housing. But which is more needed,which should be built? Making beanie hats is more profitable than producing public transportation at affordable fares. Which should be done? The fact is that the "unseen hand," if it exists, is not working for us. The free market does not permit us to expend our resources wisely, or to reach desirable goals, or to solve serious and difficult problems such as the energy crisis, inflation, or unemployment. Dr. Friedman's system does not make for freedom; it is an outworn idea whose time is past. □

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Joseph P. Lash

Memorial to Spain

On April 13, 1980, a meeting was held at the College of the City of New York at which a plaque was unveiled to honor the students of CCNY who died fighting fascism in Spain. Among the speakers was Joseph P. Lash, class of 1931.

As one thinks back to the 1930s and to these men who were our classmates, some perhaps would wish to argue the justice of this faction, the cruelty of that, but somehow on this solemn occasion ideology seems to be hollow and one stands before this profound memory of young men in the prime of their manhood silently disappearign from the haunts of classroom and alcove to make their way along that underground railway that led through France, always on the run from the police, over the Pyrenees into Republican Spain to their final encounter with the enemy—and they knew who the enemy was. Those of us who came back now are some 45 years older. We have a more realistic sense of the hazards, the disappointments, the heartaches that confront any effort to organize people on behalf of a cause, of a different way of life. How disparate was the group with which I was sent to Spain. It included a defecting German pilot, two nurses from Finland, as well as Dave Doran who was being sent by the national committee of the Young Communist League to serve as the political director of the many young American Communists who fought in the Brigade. What a miracle of organization it was to summon these men and women, most of them young, from all corners of the earth, to outfit them, to train them, and to send them into battle in front of Madrid.

We learn now why *this* was done, and why *that*, and some of it is not pleasant, but still the miracle remains and we are here to testify to the valor of these college classmates who were part of its validity. They had a rare sense of purpose and dedication. "One person with a belief," wrote John Stuart Mill, "is a social power equal to ninety nine who have only interests." That was their strength. They poured out their lives on behalf of a cause that was doomed, as much one sorrows to say, because of some who presumed to be friends as because of those who were avowed enemies.

But that was only part of the picture. We were young then. We thirsted to have a hand in the shaping of history, to be part of the actions and passions of mankind. Better to have loved, the philosopher has said, even if the love betrays, than not to have loved at all. But it was not betrayal. That social vision of a warless world, based on equality, respect, tolerance, was and is true. It was that vision that enabled the Brigade to take shape beneath the guns of the Fascists, that enabled men like John Gates, who should be the speaker here, not I, and George Watt, their Brigade shattered by the superior firepower of the enemy's tanks and artillery, to pick their way through the enemy's line, throw off their clothes and swim the icy Ebro nude, only to re-form, as John Gates did, the remnants into a fighting unit and to fight on.

The battle of Republican Spain was lost—at least for the time being. Or was it lost? The *New York Times* recently noted in support of a boycott of the Moscow Olympics what a mistake it had been for the democracies to take part in Hitler's Olympics; his success then was one of the factors that enabled him to push forward with his monstrous program of aggression. We are always fascinated by the great "ifs" of history. If Roosevelt had permitted the Republican government to purchase arms and munitions here, would that cause have been lost? Had the men whom we commemorate here had tanks and planes, would they have thrown back the tanks and planes that Hitler and Mussolini sent to their Fascist divisions? And would such a repulse not have emboldened the democracies and Russia to stand up to Hitler sooner? What holocausts might the world have been spared!

But let us put that "if" aside and deal with the grim events as they unrolled in turn: the investment of Czechoslovakia, the destruction of Poland, the collapse of France. The death of these men, the Brigade, the resistance of the Spanish Republic were all part of that slow awakening in the West that was the prerequisite to the building of the wartime coalition. . . .

Mrs. Roosevelt said in 1939 of projects like the WPA, the NYA, the CCC that they had not basically solved the problems of poverty and inequality, but with them we had bought ourselves time to think. That we can say too of these men and the Brigade they represented. With them the democracies, especially the American, which could have pursued another, more isolationist course, bought itself time to think about the policies and sympathies that eventually brought it into the wartime coalition that overthrew Hitler and Mussolini.

When, in the '20s, I walked daily along St. Nicholas Terrace on the way to the Great Hall . . . I would go by the statue of General Webb, once president of this college, and before that the leader of the troops at Gettysburg. Little did I think that 50 years later I would help unveil a plaque to men equally illustrious in battle, but here we are.

Once, over Madrid's short-wave station, I said:

> We to whom democracy, equality, freedom are more than catchwords, but realities of human relations, to whom the Fourth of July represents a day of significant progress for human society, are eternally indebted to these youthful compatriots. With their lives they are vindicating in Spain the United States of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

That was said on the Fourth of July, 1937. It is true today. What they consecrated with their blood, it is our duty to vindicate by our work and thought. □

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The Sunbelt Society

The following four essays examine the phenomenon of the Sunbelt from a number of perspectives.

ALFRED J. WATKINS begins by examining the rapid growth of the Sunbelt. He argues that the attraction of the Sunbelt region to business can be traced to the region's low wages, modest taxes, limited unionization, and meager welfare benefits. The Sunbelt's "good business climate," he continues, has also provided corporations and their political allies with a weapon to use against workers and unions in the North. Thus, while businesses hold down wages and unionization in the Sunbelt, they also use selective plant closings and relocations to limit wages and worker militancy in the North. Watkins suggests a number of reforms to keep corporations from waging this extortion against Northern workers and cities.

GEORGE N. GREEN agrees with Watkins that corporations and their political allies have fought a successful campaign to limit unionization in the Sunbelt. Using Texas as an example, Green shows that the evolution of the labor movement in the Sunbelt is about 20 years behind the North. In many instances the labor movement's political decisions and endorsements have reflected its conservative environment, inhibiting its cooperation with the political left. Despite many obstacles, Green is optimistic that the labor movement will expand in the Sunbelt, and that it will eventually deprive predatory corporations of their last American frontier.

ARMANDO GUTIÉRREZ examines one of the groups that is most likely to be affected by and play a role in the future of the Sunbelt. The Chicano population is one of the Sunbelt's most impoverished, exploited, politically inactive, and splintered groups. Gutiérrez traces the struggle of Hispanics for civil and economic equality, concluding that while progress has been made it is far from complete. Gutiérrez believes that one factor that aided Chicano progress was the formation in 1970 of the splinter party Raza Unida.

Raza Unida was stimulated by the lack of concern for Chicano needs within the Democratic party. When Raza Unida began running its own candidates for office, it drew enough support away for the Democratic party to force some concessions. While Raza Unida continues to run candidates, most Chicanos have returned to the Democratic party. The influence of the Chicano population remains less significant than its numbers because of political conflicts within the community and because of exceptionally low rates of participation. Gutiérrez is unsure what political strategy will be pursued by the Hispanic population, but he notes that a consolidated and active community could play a major role in the Sunbelt's future.

RICHARD MURRAY centers attention on the petroleum-based affluence of Houston—the golden bucket of the Sunbelt. Murray's thesis

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HARRELL RODGERS is the editor of our special "Sunbelt Society" feature.

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is consistent with that of Green and Watkins. Houston, like the rest of the Sunbelt, has been slower than the rest of the nation in challenging and limiting the role that private economic elites play in the political process. Until recently, a progrowth elite, composed of builders, contractors, and realtors, has dominated Houston's political system. Taxes, public services, building regulations, and zoning were held in abeyance, while uncontrolled and unplanned growth made the business elite rich and powerful. A federal court decision requiring that a majority of the city council seats be filled from single-member districts has altered the political elite, and now there are signs of changing political priorities toward a concern for the impact of growth and the quality of life in America's richest city.

—Harrell Rodgers □

Alfred J. Watkins

"Good Business Climates"

The Second War Between the States

When journalists discuss the rise of the Sunbelt, they often invoke the metaphor of war. The editors of *Business Week*, for example, argue that growth in the Southern Rim and economic decline in the Northeast is a prelude to "a second war between the states." They warn against the outbreak of a "bitter and divisive struggle for income, jobs, people, and capital." Kirkpatrick Sale, in a phrase reminiscent of 19th-century European balance-of-power politics, announced that in the recent "power shift" the "rimster cowboys" have wrested control of the nation from their arch foes, the Yankee Eastern establishment.

In the light of this martial rhetoric, it would appear that the Northeast and the Sunbelt are engaged in a titanic struggle. But who are the combatants? Why are they fighting? What weapons do they employ?

Despite the headlines, the real war is not between regional public officials, chambers of commerce, or corporations. Instead, the war pits corporations and their political allies against unions, welfare recipients, the unemployed, and publicly financed social-service agencies. The corporate arsenal includes such weapons as threats of plant closings, the ability to wreak economic havoc on local economies, and a propaganda campaign suggesting that, in some form or other, we are all in the midst of a struggle for regional power. The corporations are fighting for the restoration of a "good business climate" in the Northeast—a code word for less union militancy, the "right" to pay lower wages, and a political environment that views most taxation, social services, and corporate regulations as unwarranted intrusions on the rights of private property.

From the corporate perspective, the South is the perfect arena in which to wage this struggle. More than any other region, it offers a vivid illustration of the supposed benefits associated with a "good business climate." The Southern economy indeed has grown dramatically since the 1950s.

Ever since the 1880s, when Henry Grady

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and other proponents of the New South tried to convince corporate leaders that the South was a secure bastion of unfettered free enterprise and cheap labor, Southern officials have rarely deviated from their probusiness attitudes. The South entered the Great Depression as little more than a domestic colony for Northern industrialists. In 1938, for example, President Roosevelt, noting its widespread poverty, disease, illiteracy, and lack of industry, described the South as "the nation's number one economic problem." Eight years later, John Gunther characterized Texas as "New York's most valuable foreign possession." Both men's assertions were buttressed by a 1947 congressional report entitled *The Agricultural and Economic Problems of the South.* In that document, Congress described the prominent features of the Southern economy and concluded that "in many ways the South has served as a colonial empire to other regions of the nation."

However, in the three decades since that congressional report was published, the Southern economy has changed dramatically. Tenant farming and sharecropping, so pervasive during the 1920s and 1930s, have all but disappeared. Southern agriculture was liberated from the ruinous effects of the crop-lien system and monoculture. The old economic foundation of cotton, tobacco, textiles, and lumber was replaced by oil, aerospace, electronics, and agribusiness, and the South indeed has become one of the most rapidly growing, technologically sophisticated industrial centers in the nation.

But, despite this economic transformation, many significant features of Southern society have not changed during the past century:

- Southern workers are still the lowest paid in the nation.
- Southern workers still receive fewer fringe benefits and social services than their counterparts in other regions.
- Southern workers are among the least unionized in the nation, and the closed shop is outlawed almost universally throughout the South.

Because of these conditions in the South, corporate leaders believe they can use the rhetoric of regional confrontation against union militancy and public-sector generosity in the North. By casting the conflict in terms of regional competition, corporate executives hope to convince public officials and the working class that offering the corporations greater concessions will either attract new plants and industries or dissuade the ones already there from locating elsewhere. After all, unions will have little bargaining power if they have no one with whom to bargain. Similarly, public officials will have few resources to distribute if departing corporations erode the municipal tax base and banks refuse to purchase municipal bonds.

Thus, for Northern workers, all the journalistic hype concerning the "rise of the Sunbelt" and the "second war between the states" boils down to one ominous message: Accept fewer social benefits and lower wages, forsake the foolishness of union militancy—in short, emulate your Southern brethren and establish "a good business climate" in the Northeast—and you, too, can live in a rapidly growing, "prosperous" region. Otherwise, industry will locate elsewhere and you will continue to lose your jobs.

While the rapid growth and economic transformation of the South has been a fairly recent phenomenon, the attempt to attract new investment with the siren call of a docile, low-wage labor force has been heard for at least a hundred years. During the decades immediately following the Civil War, as labor troubles in the North boiled over into violent confrontations, Southerners were quick to advertise what they perceived as relative tranquillity in the South. In 1877, for example, the *Raleigh Observer* (August 8, 1877) commented that

> . . . the peaceful, self-contained attitude of the Southern states presents too striking a contrast with that of the convulsed, panic stricken, mob ridden states of the North not to attract attention. Money invested here is as safe from the rude hand of mob violence as it is in the best United States bond.

In 1894, the *Atlanta Constitution* conveniently ignored the Populist frenzy that was then sweeping the South. Instead, the newspaper remarked (August 26, 1894), "how comforting, sustaining and inspiring is the

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reflection that while these industrial and social storms have been raging around us, we in the South have been resting in peace, in safety, and in comparative comfort."

Racial animosity, which inhibited a unified labor movement from opposing Southern capitalism, was often held out as an additional inducement for Northern manufacturers. In 1928, the Chamber of Commerce in Charlotte, North Carolina, described that city's labor force as "the finest in the country today, native white, sober, industrious; labor troubles practically unknown." Perhaps the most candid statement concerning the economic benefits of racial dissension was expressed in 1886 by John W. Dubose, an Alabama businessman. "The white laboring classes," he asserted, "are separated from the Negroes, working all day side by side with them, by an innate consciousness of race superiortiy. This sentiment dignifies the character of white labor. It excites a sentiment of sympathy and equality on their part with the classes above them."

Northern manufacturers were quick to recognize the lower costs and higher profits available to them in the South. One Northern textile executive (probably in the 1920s) remarked,

> As compared to New England and the Northeastern part of the country, the South has the advantage of longer hours of labor, lower wage scales, lower taxes, and legislation which gives a manufacturing plant a wider latitude than is usually possible in the North in the way of running overtime and at night. . . . The South is fortunate in having a supply of native American labor which is still satisfied to work at a low wage. [Quoted in Broadus Mitchell, *The Industrial Revolution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1930), p. 38.]

However, low wages and long hours were all that these "fortunate" Southerners received. One study completed in 1927 found that the average weekly full-time earnings in five Southern states was $12.94. In New England, the corresponding figure was $19.12, or 48 percent higher. In 1928, a survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that average actual weekly earnings (not average full-time earnings) were $10.98 in five Southern states and $17.45 in New England.

Similar disparities existed in working conditions and labor laws. During the 1920s the legally established limit on working hours was 55 hours in South Carolina, 60 hours in Georgia and North Carolina, and in Alabama no legal maximum had been established. In addition, every Southern state permitted night work for women, a 12-hour night shift, and child-labor laws only pertaining to children under the age of fourteen. Massachusetts, by comparison, set a legal limit of 48 working hours and prohibited night work for women.

The "good business climate" produced by these lenient and often unenforced labor laws succeeded in attracting some Northern industrialists. Immediately after World War I, textile manufacturing grew by leaps and bounds in the South as Northern capital took advantage of the large pools of cheap Southern labor. During 1923, for example, the number of spindles in the South increased by 518,000, while they declined by 107,000 in New England and by 35,000 in Massachusetts alone. Cloth that cost 34 cents per pound to manufacture in New England could be produced for 22 cents in Southern factories. By 1927, 62 percent of the nation's cotton mills, employing 60 percent of all textile workers and contributing 58 percent of the value added in that industry, were located in the South. Between 1925 and 1927, New England lost 30 cotton mills, 9,312 textile jobs, and its share of value added declined by 2.4 percent. Massachusetts, which had previously been the leading textile state, slipped to second place, behind North Carolina.

Southerners were especially vocal in their attacks against federal legislation outlawing some of the worst labor abuses. In 1916, Congress passed the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act, which excluded from interstate commerce all goods manufactured by children under fourteen. That act was subsequently thrown out by the Supreme Court in a case brought by the editor of the *Southern Textile Bulletin*. A constitutional

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amendment that had the same purpose as the Keating-Owen Act was passed by Congress in 1924 but was never ratified due to the bitter opposition of Southern politicians. Mississippi's Senator Hubert D. Stephens argued that the proposed amendment was "part of a hellish scheme laid in foreign countries to destroy our government." Georgia's secretary of state declared that "it would destroy the home. It would destroy a civilization based on the Bible."

When the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed by Congress in 1938, Southerners led a bitter fight against that legislation and later called for its repeal. Their opposition was based on the belief that

> . . . high and uniform minimum wage and industry-wide collective bargaining will greatly increase the difficulty of closing the present enormous gap between levels of living in the South and in other parts of the country. . . . The issue turns on the question whether these differentials are the inevitable price the South must pay to secure the extra regional capital needed to increase the productivity of the Southern economy. [Testimony by J. V. Van Sickle, concerning the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, "Study of the Agricultural and Economic Problems of the Cotton Belt," Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on Cotton of the Committee on Agriculture, 80th Cong., 1st Sess., July 7 and July 8 1947, p. 688.]

Apart from the issue of whether lower wages were essential for attracting industry, Southern businessmen were quick to add that many Southerners were so destitute that almost any wage, no matter how low, would be eagerly accepted.

Today the South has grown dramatically and replaced its colonial economy with modern, high-technology industries, but Southern businessmen and politicians still advertise the low wages, absence of unions, strong work ethic, and favorable political treatment that corporations can expect to find. Not surprisingly, businessmen have responded eagerly to the South's "good business climate."

High on the list of factors favoring this "good business climate" is the absence of unions. A South Carolina survey reported that the primary factor attracting firms to that state is the relatively weak position of the unions. Another study on business relocation noted:

> When responding to questions "on the record," businessmen tend to put wages and unions at the bottom of any list of reasons for moving south. "Off the record," however, they often admit that unions or "better labor management relations" (a euphemism for "getting out from under union domination") is a prime reason for their decision to move. [Richard B. McKenzie, *Restrictions on Business Mobility* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1979), p. 45.

Donovan Dennis, a vice-president of the Fantus Corporation, a plant-relocation consulting firm, agrees that unionization is a major consideration when firms decide to relocate: "Labor costs are the big thing, far and away. Nine of 10 times you can hang it on labor costs and unionization."

By moving South, businessmen can certainly escape "union domination." They also will find a political environment that inhibits union organizers and enhances the region's "good business climate." Except for Louisiana, every state in the South has enacted some form of "right to work" legislation outlawing the closed shop. This makes union organizing extremely difficult and, consequently, increases the percentage of the labor force that has no union affiliation. As of 1974, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 26.2 percent of all employees in the United States were union members. In the South, the percentages were: Alabama 19.1 percent; Arkansas 16.8 percent; Florida 12.5 percent; Georgia 14.5 percent; Louisiana 16.3 percent; Mississippi 12.0 percent; North Carolina 6.9 percent; South Carolina 8 percent; Tennessee 18.7 percent; Texas 13 percent; Virginia 13.8 percent.

The correlation between union membership and economic growth has become especially strong in the past few years. *Business Week* corroborated this fact several years ago in an article aptly entitled "No Welcome Mat for Unions in the Sunbelt." In that article, the author noted:

> . . . North Carolina, where industrial jobs that

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offer low wages are mushrooming, ranked last among the 50 states in 1974, with only 6.9% of its workforce unionized. In contrast, industry has been moving out of states with high rates of unionization: Michigan (38.4%), New York (38%), and Pennsylvania (37.5%).

More ominously, the article went on to report that

> . . . not only have smaller companies by the hundreds escaped unions by moving South, but major companies in the rubber, auto, and electrical equipment industries, among others, also have been spotting plants outside the Northern strongholds. [*Business Week*, May 17, 1976.]

Not only is there no welcome mat for unions in the Sunbelt, there also is none for Northern firms that want to move South while retaining their Northern wage scales and union affiliation. In several instances, these firms have been literally run out of town with all the ferocity usually reserved for union organizers. One site-selection consultant working with the Gastonia, North Carolina, Chamber of Commerce said, "You tell 'em you've got a union, and boom—they'll flat run you out of town on the next plane." While Philip Coyle, the president of the Gastonia Chamber of Commerce, denied the allegation, calling it "hogwash," he went on to explain how important a nonunion atmosphere is to the economic health of Gastonia: "Some of these companies damn near went out of business in high union areas. You'd be amazed at how many companies just walk in my door looking for what we can offer. Let's face it; the reason a lot of companies come here is because of the labor atmosphere."

Apparently, Gastonia is not the only community in which the business leaders refuse to sully their low-wage reputation by accepting high-paying, unionized corporations. In 1978, the *Wall Street Journal* (February 10), in a front-page story—headlined "Yankee Go Home?"—reported that "fearful of unions and competition for local labor, community leaders in many areas have quietly been spurning Northern companies eager to move operations into the Sunbelt." Maurice Fulton, chairman of the Fantus Corporation, agreed with the *Wall Street Journal*'s assessment: "We've had a good deal of experience representing companies that pay a national wage," he explained, "and it has been difficult to find [Southern] towns that would accept high wage rates or unions."

The relatively low incidence of union members has not only reduced the time lost due to strikes in the South, but it has also kept wages and fringe benefits below those received by Northern workers. In his 1979 American Enterprise Study, *Restrictions on Business Mobility*, on page 46, economist Richard B. McKenzie argues forcefully that low unionization is primarily responsible for lower wage rates in the South. According to McKenzie:

> Many businesses understandably want to move away from unions. A substantial body of economic research shows that unions are responsible for wages being anywhere from 5 to 25 percent higher in unionized shops than in nonunionized shops. The average increase found by various studies is about 10 percent. Further, many business executives argue that unions tend to complicate the production process, slowing the decision-making process and causing management to retain a higher percentage of inefficient and lackadaisical workers. All of this adds to the costs of production and makes successful competition and a firm's long-run survival uncertain. In short, the absence of unions and the cultural bias against them in the South has given Southern states a competitive advantage.

Another research monograph, published in 1973 under the auspices of the University of South Carolina's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, compared Northeastern and Southern wage rates in the cotton textile and synthetic textile industries. The investigators discovered large disparities in the total hourly compensation received by workers in the two regions. In the cotton textile industry, for example, Southern workers' average hourly total compensation

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(wages plus fringe benefits) was $3.49 while Northern workers performing essentially the same tasks earned $5.55 per hour, or 59 percent more! Although the differentials in the hourly wages was "only" 52 percent in favor of Northeastern workers, leave time (except sick leave), compensation, and unemployment benefits were approximately 300 percent higher in Northern factories, while life insurance and health benefits were 90 percent greater. In the synthetic textile industry, the differential in total conpensation between the two regions was much lower, yet the pattern was the same. In every category of total compensation, Northern textile workers were paid more than their Southern counterparts.

Often these disparities are justified by claims that Southern workers are less productive than their Northern counterparts or that the cost of living is lower in the South. However, the data do not support either of these arguments.

Evidence accumulated over the past 30 years indicates conclusively that Southern workers are no less productive than Northern workers. In fact, recent evidence suggests that today's Southern labor productivity may exceed that of Northern workers. A 1951 landmark study, conducted by two Duke University economists, Calvin Hoover and B. U. Ratchford, entitled *Economic Resources and Policies of the South*, reported that—

> . . . in manufacturing, the available evidence indicates that low labor productivity is not an innate characteristic of southern labor. Man for man, using the same ratio of economic resources and with equally good management, southern labor can produce approximately as efficiently as non-southern labor.

In a 1949 report, entitled *Why Industry Moves South*, commissioned by the National Planning Association, Glenn McLaughlin and Stefan Robock had reached similar conclusions. They quote one rubber company executive who declared, "Productivity is just as good if not better in our Southern plant." They also quote an official of a major electrical appliance manufacturing company who told them, "Although we originally had some doubts about labor productivity in the South, our experience has revealed a high efficiency of Southern labor."

In the intervening years since those earlier studies were published, new manufacturing facilities have blossomed in the South while investment has lagged in the North. Consequently, Southern workers have the use of the most modern, up-to-date equipment and production techniques while Northern workers are hampered by outmoded, less productive facilities.

The higher productivity of Southern labor becomes especially noticeable during recessions, when firms schedule production cutbacks. Manufacturers shut down their least productive facilities first and concentrate the remaining output in their high-productivity, low unit-cost plants. During the last recession, this practice resulted in earlier and longer closings in the North and shorter layoffs in the South. According to a *Wall Street Journal* article, entitled "Sick Cities: Many Municipalities Lag Behind the Rest of the Nation in Recovering From Economic Downturn," the principal reason for shorter layoffs in the South is that region's *higher* labor productivity. Economist Lewis Mandell also referred to the higher productivity of Southern labor when he told an interviewer for *Iron Age*, "All other things being equal, you can get people [of equal productivity] to work for less money [in the South], or for the same amount of money, you can get better qualified employees."

As for the cost-of-living argument, annual data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that while the cost of living is indeed lower in the South, the wage-rate differentials exceed the cost-of-living disparities. More important, while the cost-of-living differentials between the two regions have been narrowing, wage disparities have increased. Clearly, despite their equal or higher productivity, Southerners receive a lower real wage because the political and business leaders in their region equate the "work ethic" and lower wages with economic salvation and prosperity—and back up their moral suasion with legislation that inhibits

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union organizers. Thus, in the South, such groups as farm workers and public-sector employees are forbidden to bargain collectively, and welfare benefits and other publicly supported social services are kept below the poverty line.

This last point was underscored by Louis Welch, a former mayor and current president of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, who recently remarked that "Houston is an attractive city for people who want to work. Those who don't can get a better deal in New York or St. Louis." Mr. Welch failed to mention that Houston's "attractiveness" is not based on high wages but on a niggardly welfare system that, in the words of the *Wall Street Journal*, "is notoriously tightfisted."

According to figures released by the Texas Department of Public Welfare, in 1975 only 18 percent of the state's eligible families received any aid. On an average, welfare payments total $1.00 per day per person and the annual income of a Texas family subsisting only on welfare and Food Stamps fell 40 percent below the federal poverty level for a nonfarm family of four. However, in 1977 the Department of Public Welfare did request that the legislature raise welfare payments by 40¢ per person per day. Despite a $2 billion surplus in the state treasury, the legislature found that request exorbitant. It finally consented to a 10¢ increase, the first since 1969. Bill Clayton, speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, explained the legislature's reluctance to raise benefits by claiming that low benefits increase workers' incentives to take any job they are offered, no matter how low the pay. "Any time you get support payments to a high level," he declared, "you discourage incentives. The incentive is the only way we have to break the poverty cycle."

Figures released by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare indicate that only Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi offer more "incentives" and pay lower welfare benefits than Texas. Herbert J. Ranschburg, research director of the New York Citizens' Budget Commission, estimated in 1976 that welfare payments cost each Houstonian only $15.93 per year. New York City's welfare budget, in comparison, amounted to $159 per capita, Chicago and Philadelphia residents paid $170 each, and in Detroit welfare spending totaled $222 per capita.

Texas does not only rank low in welfare payments, it also ranks near the bottom on most social-welfare indicators. Data from the 1970 Census place Texas among the nation's 10 poorest states in terms of the proportion of its population living in poverty. While 19 percent of all Texans were living in poverty in 1970, the governor's office estimated that 2.5 million Texans, or 21 percent of the state's population, live at or below the poverty level in 1975. Compounding the problem, Texas ranks 49th in the level of unemployment compensation payments ($63 per week); 46th in annual expenditures per elementary and secondary student; 48th in aid to families with dependent children; 42nd in per capita operating expenditures for juvenile correction facilities; 49th in average old-age pensions ($54 per month). Despite the state's low rating on these indices, then-Governor Briscoe told a reporter from the *Wall Street Journal*, "We've got to level off this state spending."

These facts, figures, and political attitudes have not gone unnoticed by the business community. The Fantus Corporation recently ranked the "business climate" in Texas tops in the nation.

In a 1952 study entitled *The Economics of New England*, Harvard economist Seymour E. Harris blamed Southern politicians for many of the economic problems plaguing the New England economy. His analysis recognized that to a certain extent surplus labor resulting from displaced agricultural workers gave the South a natural cost advantage. He did not begrudge the South this advantage, nor did he object to that region's economic development and industrial modernization, even if it produced slow growth in New England. Instead, Harris directed his attack against those Southern policies and political attitudes that today are considered part and parcel of a "good business climate."

By keeping trade unions out, by undercutting security benefits, by imposing taxes excessively

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on consumers and sparing business, by offering subsidies to new firms coming in, by tolerating long hours for women and children and shying away from reasonable minimum wage laws, a state or region can attract industries. . . . My objection is not to subsidies in the South. . . . The objection is rather against practices which give the South an unfair advantage by depressing the standard of living of workers through legislation or lack of it.

From Harris's perspective, the South's "good business climate" was tantamount to a declaration of war against labor standards in the North. He recommended that Northern businessmen and politicians retaliate by promoting national legislation outlawing some of the most exploitative Southern labor policies. This, he claimed, would ensure that the burden of Southern growth would not fall exclusively on the backs of Southern workers. In addition, it would prevent Southern labor from serving as unwitting accomplices to the destruction of Northern wage and benefit standards.

Unfortunately, Harris's recommendations were not followed. As a result, Northern businessmen now raise the specter of competition from lower paid, nonunionized Southern labor to demand that their workers accept lower wages and fewer fringe benefits. If concessions are not forthcoming, they threaten to close their factories in the North and to relocate in the Sunbelt.

Data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggest that Northern businessmen have not been making idle threats. Between 1970 and 1974, the number of jobs in the United States increased by 9.3 percent. During that same period, the number of people at work in cities rated by the Fantus Corporation as having a bad business climate dropped precipitously. The number of jobs in Detroit declined by 18.5 percent and in St. Louis by 18.3 percent. Major job losses also occurred in Baltimore (12.7 percent), Philadelphia (12.1 percent), Washington, D.C. (10.2 percent), and Chicago (8.4 percent). Between 1960 and 1970, a period of unprecedented prospertiy and economic growth, employment increases in the Baltimore, Cincinnati, Detroit, Milwaukee, Cleveland, St. Louis, Newark, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and New York metropolitan areas lagged behind the national average. Houston and Atlanta, by comparison, more than doubled the U.S. average employment growth rate.

Despite these pessimistic trends, many businessmen and politicians believe the decline in most Northern cities can be reversed. But in order to achieve an economic renaissance, they argue that Northern labor must refrain from appealing for more federal aid or demanding that federal contracts be redirected to Northern factories. Instead, they demand that Northern workers emulate their Southern brethren by accepting lower wages, fewer fringe benefits, cuts in social services, reductions in business taxes, and increased local government subsidies to business.

Because of the promise of more jobs, Felix Rohatyn, the head of New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation, believes that Northern workers will allow their political leaders to make the concessions that business demands. In discussing the political leverage that a federally financed Urban Bank would give the business community Rohatyn declared:

> I can't tell you how convinced I am that many of our problems stem from structural weaknesses in our political system. But I believe the trigger for political change could be new economic activity. . . . We will have an entity which could say to four Governors, "We have $2 billion to invest which we might make. But first we need to make the following changes in the tax structure or changes are needed in union work rules. . . ." Because of the possibility of economic activity, the Governors will accept political change. What we are creating is a way to give politicians the excuse to do what they know ought to be done anyway. That's the way we got reforms in New York City's government. Every few weeks another bond issue had to be sold. Each required concessions. [Quoted in Michael J. McManus and Frank A. Weill, "No One Is in Charge," *Empire State Report*, October-November 1976, p. 336.]

Three years later, in a keynote address in Austin, Texas, Rohatyn spelled out in greater detail the precise concessions that were

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needed to restore investor confidence in New York City. He listed such "unpopular but necessary decisions" as the imposition of tuition at the City University, a 30 percent increase in transit fares, a 20 percent reduction in the city work force, a renewed emphasis on labor productivity coupled with wage freezes and wage deferrals, a cut in property taxes to lower land acquisition costs for the real estate industry, welfare reform, and tax reductions for business.

According to Rohatyn, two preliminary steps were necessary before these austerity measures could be imposed on New York City's working class. First, labor leaders and politicians had to believe that without austerity, business would never return and, in all probability, would continue to leave at an accelerating rate. This belief, he declared, "help[ed] to create a public climate which permit[ted] political leaders to make unpopular decisions without committing Hara-Kiri." Second, business leaders intervened actively and forcefully in the political and financial affairs of New York City. The Municipal Assistance Corporation was given control over $1.25 billion of city tax revenues to repay city bondholders. The Emergency Financial Control Board was given the power to approve or veto items in the city budget, even after these expenditures had been passed by the City Council and signed by the Mayor. According to Rohatyn, business control over the city's purse strings was merely a prelude to more direct involvement in the city's political affairs:

> The influence that the private members of NAC and the EFCB exerted was on the political process itself. . . . The direction and philosophy of a large unit of government was fundamentally and permanently changed as a result of the involvement, some would say intrusion, of the private sector in government. In my judgment this is a principle that is applicable to a vast array of national problems, for reasons not too dissimilar to the New York experience. . . . The United States today in many ways is similar to New York City in 1975. [From an address before the Symposium on Government and Business, in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, University of Texas, at Austin, March 1, 1979.]

Rohatyn concluded by asserting that democracy may "be a luxury that requires an abundance of resources which may be on the point of running out." If so, "a change in political climate is needed to cope with political paralysis. Involved businessmen . . . can have an impact at the grassroots level and provide its political leaders with a platform for action."

In view of corporate preconditions for reinvestment in the North and Rohatyn's veiled call for a bloodless corporate *çoup d'état*, it is essential to forge a series of alternative policies designed to rebuild the economic base in the North without sacrificing either democracy, labor standards, or social programs. However, if they are to succeed, these alternatives must focus on two fronts simultaneously.

FIRST, wages, fringe benefits, and social services throughout the nation, and especially in the South, must be raised so that corporations no longer have an incentive to relocate. At a minimum this would require:

- Repeal of Section 14B of the Taft-Hartley Act so that the open shop is banished from the nation.
- Amendment of the National Labor Relations Act to require swift punishment and severe penalties for firms that violate NLRB rulings.
- A massive effort by unions to organize both public- and private-sector employees in the South.
- A guaranteed annual income that ensures all families an adequate respectable standard of living.
- National welfare reform coupled with substantial benefit improvements for all recipients.

These policies would have several beneficial effects for the working class and the unemployed. Most important, they would reduce the incentive for corporations to relocate to low-wage, nonunion regions. They also would remove the necessity for the poor and unemployed to accept any job they are offered, no matter how low the wage. Finally, they would benefit workers in all the country's regions and end the rhetoric of regional confrontation.

SECOND, these policies alone, however, will

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not be sufficient. They must be supplemented by financial penalties on corporate mobility and by greater public control over all corporate decisions. Now corporate relocations place heavy financial burdens on the communities they leave. Workers lose their jobs, unemployment and welfare payments increase, and tax collections decline. Despite these costs, present state and national statutes do not force corporations to include them in their balance sheet. As a result, decisions to relocate are made on the basis of private costs, not on the basis of the full social cost. From society's perspective, this produces a misallocation of resources. But by placing financial penalties on corporations that wish to relocate, local communities will be compensated for the costs imposed on them by corporations, and decisions to relocate will be based on a comparison of all costs (private and public) and all benefits associated with a move.

At present, corporations can wrest concessions from labor and local public officials because ultimately business controls the allocation of resources, the creation of jobs, and the size of the tax base. Until this power is removed from corporate boardrooms and vested in public officials who must answer to the electorate, we will witness additional corporate "intrusions" into the affairs of government and the imposition of "good business climates" in all regions. Failure to act will lead not only to a decline in living standards and social services, but to an eventual destruction of democracy. □

George N. Green

The Union Movement in the Southwest

The history of the labor movement in the South is varied and colorful, though little known. The first Southern unions were formed in the major cities early in the 19th century, especially in the building and printing trades. Shortly after the Civil War, the longshoremen and the various railroad unions organized vigorous Southern affiliates. Among the railroad unions, in fact, the machinists, boilermakers, and blacksmiths all were of Southern origin—they all were founded around 1888 in Atlanta, which was the South's most important railroad center at the time. Among the longshoremen, the screwmen were in an especially strategic position since they stowed cotton and tabacco aboard ships with jackscrews; these products had to be carefully packed in order to be profitable. Among industrial organizations, the brewery workers and mine workers organized in the South in the 1880s and 1890s.

The first significant general labor organization was the Knights of Labor, which sent 15 organizers into the South in 1878, especially into Alabama and Kentucky. A successful 1884 strike on the Jay Gould railroads catapulted the Knights into the undisputed leadership of the nation's labor movement. The Knight's primary goals were the eight-hour work day, industrial safety, child labor laws, and equal pay for women. The Southern Knights numbered close to 50,000 in 1886, out of a total membership of 730,000 throughout the country.

Gould goaded the union into precipitate action by firing a Texas union leader. Under

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the dynamic leadership of Martin Irons, some 9,000 employees of Gould's Southwestern railroads walked out. The strike began peacefully, but soon Jim Courtright, a "notorious desperado," both acting city marshall of Fort Worth and a hired gunman for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, shot down three or four pickets. One of his deputies was killed at the Battle of Buttermilk Switch in Fort Worth. The Texas militia was then dispatched to Fort Worth. Their presence, along with 200 federal deputies who were also company gunmen, the virtual absence of a strike fund, the availability of cheap scabs, the presence of corporate spies in all the union assemblies, and corporate control of the courts insured Gould's victory in less than two months.

Patterns of union growth in the South resembled those in the rest of the country. Expansion fluctuated with the business cycle—with unions growing rapidly during such periods of ferment as the mid-1880s and the two world wars, but it declined during such open-shop periods as the 1920s. After 1880 Texas was the most populous and rapidly industrializing state in the South, and so may serve as something of a case study for the region.

In the 1890s the first city labor councils were organized, and in 1900 the Texas State Federation of Labor was formed in Cleburne. The State Federation, which represented some 8,500 workers, worked alongside the Railroad Brotherhoods and the Farmers' Union in lobbying for progressive legislation. As a result, safety laws and eight-hour laws were passed for many workers. Antiblacklisting acts went on the books. Free textbooks were provided for the public schools. Texas became one of the first states to adopt workers' accident compensation, and child labor was at least curtailed.

Even as labor enjoyed these successes, the counterattacks began. The streetcar workers of Houston were unjustly accused of bombing streetcars, and the State Federation's vice-president was arrested for complicity. Imported strikebreakers were armed and used in another streetcar strike in San Antonio and in the lumber camps of East Texas. Mexican American agricultural workers in the Rio Grande Valley and the smelter workers in El Paso saw their unions destroyed by imported Mexican immigrants in the 1910s. The burgeoning Texas Oil Workers' union was smashed in 1917 when the Texas refineries refused to grant a four-dollar, eight-hour day, though they were conceded in the rest of the nation's oil areas.[1]

In 1919, growing antilabor sentiment led to the sudden founding of the open-shop movement, designed to resist the "dictatorial . . . and insolent demands of organized labor." Open-shop businesses imported strikebreakers from Mexico who finished off the Texas Oil Workers' locals. In their heartland of Dallas, the open shoppers bragged that they had forced the local Building Trades' Council to disband. In 1920, open-shop champions helped persuade Governor Will Hobby to break the Galveston Longshoremen's strike with state militia and to force the passage of the open-port law in a special session of the legislature. The law suspended several parts of the U.S. Constitution and helped obliterate longshoremen's and railway shop unions.[2]

The Great Depression weakened the moribund State Federation, and in the early 1930s it did not seem to have much reason for existence. But labor was revitalized by the 1934 election of Governor Jimmie Allred, by New Deal legislation, and by the rise of the CIO. Under Allred the eight-hour law was made effective, the sales tax was beaten, and unemployment compensation established. Spurred by the Wagner Act, the AFL and the CIO launched successful organizing drives in the late 1930s, and used wartime conditions to increase their membership tremendously

[1]Most of this information on the early movement is derived from Ray Marshall, *Labor in the South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), and from Ruth Allen, *Chapters in the History of Organized Labor in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Bureau of Research in the Social Sciences, 1941) and *The Great Southwest Strike* (same publisher, 1942).

[2]Quote from W. S. Mosher, "Open Shop in the Southwest," *Open Shop Review*, 18 (March 1921), pp. 115-24. *San Antonio Weekly Dispatch*, April 3, May 15, July 17, 1920, and May 14, November 5, 1921. Marshall, *Labor in the South*, pp. 68-69. Lewis Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), pp. 270-71.

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between 1941 and 1945. Oil refineries, packinghouses, steel and aircraft plants, dock workers, truck drivers, pecan shellers, and auto workers were unionized.[3]

Meanwhile, a conservative Democratic establishment—a loosely knit plutocracy of Anglo businessmen, bankers, oilmen, and lawyers—took over the state in the late 1930s. During their heyday in the 1940s and 1950s, they were dedicated to a regressive tax structure, suppression of minorities and unions, and stinginess in state services. They maintained themselves in office primarily by labor-baiting. Governor W. Lee O'Daniel, desperately needing to accomplish something to stay in office, suddenly asked for an immediate joint session of the state legislature to hear him on March 13, 1941. Though not a single man-hour of work had been lost on any defense job because of strikes, O'Daniel railed about "labor leader racketeers" who were threatening to take over Texas and cripple Britain's struggle against the Nazis. The so-called antiviolence law that resulted from this speech was so poorly drawn and so clearly unconstitutional that it did not survive long in the courts; but O'Daniel rolled on.

In 1946 an emerging urban coalition of CIO labor and minority groups backed former University of Texas president Homer Rainey for governor, but he and virtually all labor-supported candidates in Texas lost, many of them because of bitter campaigns against the "left-wing political terrorists of the CIO-PAC." Antiunion sentiment crested in 1947, when the Texas Manufacturers Association, regional chambers of commerce, and right-wing extremist groups successfully lobbied for a spate of regulatory laws. The solons obliged with a right-to-work law, new measures abolishing the checkoff and secondary boycotts, and by a new law subjecting unions to antitrust statutes and an anti-mass-picketing act (defining mass picketing as more than two pickets either within 50 feet of the plant entrance or within 50 feet of any other picket).

The establishment was forced into the defensive in the mid-1950s, when Governor Allàn Shivers's administration was embarrassed by insurance scandals perpetuated by his friends and appointees and by the governor's dubious real estate transactions in the Rio Grande Valley. Liberal judge Ralph Yarborough, backed by labor, waged a spirited campaign in the 1954 primary, but he soon found himself connected to a "Communistic labor menace," conjured up by Shivers. Having worn out the segregation issue earlier, in his first primary (and been warned by his closest aide, "I don't believe that old dog will hunt again"), Shivers seized on the alleged threat of a Communist takeover in Texas. Teams of Port Arthur businessmen appeared on radio and television around the state, describing their city as a ghost town because of Communist picketing. Assisted by enormous donations from corporate interest groups and the editorial support of 95 of the state's 100 daily papers, Shivers eased back into office.[4]

One historian of the labor movement in Texas, citing votes during the 1947 session of the state legislature, attributed the antilabor laws to urban influences and noted that the cities were run by businessmen. The two antiunion laws of 1941 and 1943 were opposed by a grand total of 9 rural senators and only 4 urbanites; but in the house 37 urban representatives fought the bills, while only 25 of their more numerous rural colleagues did so. The truth is that the corporations simply rendered rural-urban differences irrelevant.[5]

[3]Charles Walker, "The Ford Way of Doing Business," *The New Republiç*, May 20 and 27, 1940. Harold Shapiro, "The Pecan Shellers of San Antonio, Texas," *Southwestern Soçial Sçienç Quarterly*, March 1952, pp. 229-44. Grady Mullennix, "A History of the Texas State Federation of Labor" (University of Texas at Austin, Ph.D. dissertation, 1955), pp. 325-28. Robert Christopher, "Rebirth and Lost Opportunitites: The Texas AFL and the New Deal, 1933-1939" (University of Texas at Arlington, M.A. thesis, 1977), pp. 18, 33, 42. *Labor Unionism in Ameriçan Agriçulture*, BLS Bulletin 836 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1945), pp. 221-29, 270-81.

[4]Based on George N. Green, *The Establishment in Texas Politiçs* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979).

[5]George N. Green, "Anti-Labor Politics in Texas, 1941-1957," *Labor in the Southwest: The First 100 Years* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980).

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The gubernatorial election of Price Daniel in 1956 turned out to be a political watershed in Texas, marking the rise of a more moderate establishment. Daniel joined labor in resisting a sales tax and in criticizing the oil lobby that was putting it through the legislature, though Daniel later caved in and refused to veto it. Daniel and the labor lobby worked for the adoption of an abandoned property act and a lobby registration law. Simultaneously, tensions within the liberal bloc—labor, Mexican Americans, blacks, small farmers, independent urban Anglos—surfaced just as the bloc began wielding influence upon the state's politics. Labor was becoming more and more uncomfortable with the ideological notions of the Democrats of Texas (1956-60). AFL-CIO leaders believed that significant gains could be accomplished by compromising with the post-1956 establishment. They contended in 1960, for example, that it was futile to fight Lyndon Johnson's presidential candidacy in his home state and that tactical cooperation with Governor Daniel and Johnson's forces might prevent Democrats who were even more conservative from controlling the state convention.

Yet, the Texas AFL-CIO (under Hank Brown, its new president and Roy Evans, its secretary-treasurer), went all out for liberal lawyer Don Yarborough in the 1962 Democratic gubernatorial primary. Yarborough polled 49 percent in the runoff and very nearly prevented John Connally from becoming governor of Texas. In fact, a few crucial defections on the part of local labor and minority leaders made the difference in the outcome. To the irritation of George Meany, much of Texas labor participated unofficially in the successful liberal strategies of "going fishing" on election day rather than supporting ultraconservative Democrats William (Dollar Bill) Blakeley (1961) and Waggoner Carr (1966) when they ran against ultraconservative Republican Senator John Tower. Like other elements in the loose liberal coalition, labor (with the exception of some Dallas leaders) found it difficult to cooperate with Governor John Connally (1963-69), who denounced the very idea of a state minimum-wage law and refused even to meet in his office with a delegation of unionized Chicano farm hands from the Rio Grande Valley.[6]

The greatest single political jolt to the labor movement in Texas since the passage of the punitive laws of 1947 was the defeat of labor champion Ralph Yarborough by Lloyd Bentsen, Jr., in the 1970 Democratic senatorial primary. Yarborough had a splendid labor-liberal voting record, yet he did not sweep the Texas labor vote. Indeed, many labor precincts—as, for instance, that of the oil workers in Nederland and the general blue-collar workers in Pleasant Grove (Dallas)—voted for Bentsen. Yarborough had been tagged an antiprayer, anti-Southern exponent of minorities and youthful demonstrators, and much of the labor rank and file believed it, to the dismay of labor leaders. Clearly the labor vote, which was becoming difficult to discern in many cities, was a dubious bastion of liberal strength. As in the rest of the nation, rank-and-file union members were more conservative than labor leaders. In the state of Texas this is especially unfortunate, for here, in some ways, the battles of the 1930s are still being fought. Blacks also made a difference. They voted overwhelmingly for Yarborough, but only about a third turned out. Republicans also determined the outcome, since hundreds of thousands of them voted in the Texas Democratic primary and, of course, were out to defeat Yarborough. The labor movement then fractured: the UAW swallowed its pride and endorsed Bentsen; the Texas AFL-CIO's political arm, COPE, refrained from any endorsement; and the teamsters inscrutably supported Republican nominee George Bush.[7]

The first deep division in a Democratic gubernatorial primary between labor and the rest of the very loose liberal coalition occurred when liberal state representative Frances "Sissy" Farenthold took on conservative rancher Dolph Briscoe in the 1972 runoff.

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[6]George N. Green, "A Liberal View of Texas Politics Since the 1930s," pamphlet, to be published by the American Press, 1980.

[7]*Texas Observer*, May 15, 1970. *Official Returns*, 1970, Dallas County Clerk's Office.

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Backed by enormous sums of money from the corporate lobbies and by the usual support of the daily press, Briscoe was nevertheless hard pressed by Farenthold, who talked of levying a corporate profits tax and even of disarming the strikebreaking Texas Rangers. Meanwhile, after a bitter battle, Roy Evans won the Texas AFL-CIO presidency vacated by Hank Brown in 1971. Most of Evans's followers and a majority of the COPE delegates favored Farenthold, but she lacked the necessary two-thirds needed for an endorsement. A very large number of delegates felt that she was destined to lose and that labor had nothing to fear from Briscoe. Evans and a COPE majority then voted to make no endorsement of anyone, while the rest of the state's liberals really were fired up over the "Farenthold phenomenon." Labor's stand deprived Farenthold of some financing, but many individual unions contributed money and manpower to her cause, and by itself labor's official stand did not affect the outcome of the race. If COPE had endorsed Farenthold, if the Chicano La Raza movement had not launched a splinter effort, and if the runoff had not been held after college students had gone home for the semester, Farenthold might have overcome the margin of 1,101,000 to 888,000.

Liberal anger at labor continued when the Texas AFL-CIO associated with Dolph Briscoe's establishment administration (1973-79), which was primarily dedicated to holding the line on taxes. The Texas AFL-CIO lined up with Briscoe's forces against the liberals at the state conventions of 1974 and 1976. During the Briscoe years labor induced the establishment (which was growing increasingly restive about Republican gains) to moderate some of its standard tactics (for instance, the steamrollering at conventions) and positions. Labor won an unprecedented 13 of the 76 seats in the Texas delegation for the Democratic national convention in Kansas City and increased its representation on the 62-member state Democratic executive committee from 3 to 7. Now labor was consulted on a number of appointments and strongly influenced crucial ones to the state's industrial accident board, the Texas employment commission, and the insurance board, triggering some progressive changes in each. But Governor Briscoe helped prevent right-to-work from going into the state constitution, and he also helped create the state's public utilities commission—long a labor goal—though the governor predictably stacked it with anticonsumer appointees.[8]

In the spring of 1978 Harry Hubbard, president of the Texas AFL-CIO since 1973, and most of the state's top labor leaders believed that Briscoe had delivered sufficiently on his promises to merit labor's endorsement. That endorsement, however, required two-thirds of the COPE delegates, and only a little over half of them were willing to string along. Briscoe's challenger, Attorney General John Hill, a hard-driving champion of consumers and educational spending, had much labor support, especially from the Steelworkers, Machinists, and Teachers. Hubbard arranged a compromise whereby the governor was "recommended," while Hill was "commended." Had Briscoe received an unqualified COPE endorsement, all unions would have been obligated to close ranks behind him; he would have gotten money and campaign help, and his name would have been on labor's slate card handed to all 275,000 or so Texas union members. With no official endorsement, each union could support anyone it chose, and perhaps half of them threw in with Hill. Hill defeated Briscoe, carrying the coastal counties with the traditionally big labor vote.

Labor then pulled together, as it is able to do rather well under Hubbard, and worked for Hill against Dallas multimillionaire Republican oilman Bill Clements. Hill was widely perceived to be the sure winner, continually leading in the polls; but Clements spent $7 million, and he was particularly successful in turning out the upper- and upper-middle-class Anglo voters and in portraying himself as the conservative in a race against a big-spending liberal. Clements edged Hill and became the first Republican governor of Texas in 105 years.

During the 1979 session of the Texas

[8]Green, "A Liberal View of Texas Politics Since the 1930s."

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legislature Clements revealed that he had no grasp of the legislative process, and so he saw most of his pet projects sink out of sight—giving the state police wiretapping authority and prohibiting a state income tax. Labor followed its customary practice, in Texas at least, of lobbying for a whole gamut of people-oriented issues: the bill allowing cheap generic drugs to be substituted for higher-priced brand names, expanded bilingual education, saving the state's tough consumer protection act, and protecting the environment from strip-mining. The labor lobby failed in each of these instances, but it did help block most of Clements's programs.

At its 1979 convention, the AFL-CIO seized upon the probability that close to 800,000 voters would be lured into the hot Republican presidential primary that was featuring Connally, Reagan, and Bush; this would give labor a real opportunity to dump 3 conservative state senators and about 25 conservative state representatives in swing districts in the Democratic primary, and to replace them with liberals and moderates. That kind of turnover (facilitated by a labor pledge of about a half-million dollars) would give progressives in the 1981 legislature decisive influence over the redistricting of legislative and congressional seats. This, in conjunction with the efforts of a rebuilt liberal coalition, could even break the conservatives' 40-year grip on the state government—according to liberal speculation. An even-handed urban reapportionment is a distinct possibility, but largely because labor is already cutting deals with some very conservative incumbents in order to guarantee fairness.

In January 1979, the state's Democratic executive committee gave evidence of the changes that were underway when it commended the United Farm Workers, and state comptroller Bob Bullock startled the labor movement when he endorsed state employee unionization. These seem to be signals that a prolabor stance is becoming good politics for those who hope to survive in a changing Democratic party—though, of course, the Democrats may be buried by the surging Republicans. The majority of Texas labor favored Kennedy over Carter, though no Democratic presidential candidate—and now Carter—seems to have much of a chance of carrying Texas in 1980. A Republican presidential victory in Texas, however, could not carry enough Republicans into office to threaten Democratic supremacy in the state legislature.[9]

Meanwhile, much of the heralded growth in Texas and the Sunbelt has been in low-wage industrial jobs. Unemployment is the scourge of the poor in the Northeast, but in the heart of the Sunbelt the poor stay poor because of the sort of jobs they have. In the 11 former Confederate states the average state-level figure for hourly earnings of production workers on manufacturing payrolls was $5.48 in May 1979, with only Texas and Louisiana exceeding $6.00. In the far Southwest—California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma—the average wage was $6.38, while in the rest of the states it was $6.76. Maldistribution of income and declining control over jobs are common throughout the country, but poverty in the Sunbelt is more persistent than elsewhere. In 1979 there were more than twice as many people below the poverty line in the South than in the Northeast. One-fifth of the Texas population was below the poverty level.[10]

Over the past 40 years the average percentage of unionized Southern workers has been about half the national average. Bureau of Labor Statistics calculations for total union and association membership in 1978 show 19 percent of Southern workers organized, 25.3 percent of the workers in the Southwest, and 28.7 percent of those in the rest of the nation. As a percentage of nationwide unionization (assuming association membership does not skew the ratio), Southern unionization has gained since the mid-1960s.

In 1968, Ray Marshall listed trends favoring union growth in the South at the

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[9]Based on the author's own observations and interviews with various labor leaders and the *Texas Observer*, March 31, May 26, 1978.

[10]*Employment and Earnings*, August 1979, p. 109. Erika Sanchez, column in *Dallas Morning News*, November 25, 1979.

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time, and most of them are evidently coming into play:

- the prevailing Southern ideology is being altered by industrialization;
- unions' political power is growing because of reapportionment and increased cooperation with minorities;
- there is a growing motive to organize the South because of its increasing industrialization and because union conditions elsewhere must be protected;
- the increasing unionization of white-collar and government workers is a definite factor, as are the changing attitudes of Southern workers in the face of industrialization and urbanization.

These changing attitudes probably also depend heavily on the mass media.[11]

The first trend listed by Marshall was the migration of workers out of the South, which would help unions by reducing the supply of labor. This trend has been canceled, especially in Texas and the Southwest, by several million illegal immigrants from Mexico. Most of them do not actually take jobs held by union members, but they are considerably enlarging the pool of scabs, easing any recruitment difficulties nonunion contractors and industrial employers might have. This often has a ripple effect, driving relatively skilled nonunion native workers out of, say, highway construction, into the urban construction sector of the economy, where they compete with the building trades' unions. Southwestern unions want penalties levied against employers who hire illegals, but these measures are unlikely to be adopted as state laws unless, possibly, the Anglo majorities became emotionally aroused by the influx of aliens. Similar legislation is bogged down in Congress because of employer and Mexican American opposition.

Moreover, immigration out of the South has been reversed. Large numbers of people are moving from the North and East to the South and Southwest, especially since the fuel crunch of 1973, and these migrants tend to be young, qualified white-collar workers who have been unable to find opportunities in the North. Regional salary differences are much smaller among white-collar workers and professionals than among blue-collar workers. Consequently, factory workers, especially the unskilled, are not making the move because they cannot command the same wages in the South that they can in the North.

Other than the reversal of migration, the major change in outlook for Southern unions since 1968 involves the spread of "labor consultants" and the open campaign waged by many industries to destroy unions; but this is an active, nationwide movement that has no special Southern strategy. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Textile Workers' Union of America, however, merged in part because of intransigent antiunionism among Southern employers. Most of that industry is now concentrated in the South and Southwest. The new Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union launched a boycott against North Carolina's outlaw firm, J. P. Stevens, the second largest textile corporation in the U.S.[12]

All the negative Southern trends cited by Marshall, which make it more difficult for unions to organize, are still operative. They include the tendency for plants to locate in smaller communities; the dispersion of workers' homes, making it more difficult for union organizers to contact them; the rising living standards and changed life patterns, which make the worker more responsive to family, community, and neighborhood influences. Antiunion bastions—such as J. P. Stevens, Texas Instruments, and the Brown and Root Construction Company—remain untouched, protected by the states' antilabor laws, the Southern and Western heritage of individualism, and by the economic factors cited above. The bigger unions in the Sunbelt—Teamsters, Communications Workers, Machinists, Steelworkers, Auto Workers, Oil Workers, Carpenters, Electrical Workers,

[11]"Preliminary Union Membership Data, 1978," Bureau of Labor Statistics chart, November 1979. Ray Marshall, "The Development of Organized Labor," *Monthly Labor Review*, March 1968, pp. 67, 72.

[12]Interviews with labor leaders. Erika Sanchez, column in the *Dallas Morning News*, November 25, 1979. Harry Zeman, "Regional Pay Differentials in White Collar Occupations," *Monthly Labor Review*, January 1971, p. 53. Charles Janus, "Union Mergers in the 1970s," *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1978, p. 15.

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Food Workers—are all growing, but it is mostly the slow growth that is traceable to new hires and the organizing of small plants.

Still, there have been some exciting victories in the past year or two. The General Motors plant in Oklahoma City just signed on with 2,500 members, while another 800 in Monroe, Louisiana's runaway GM plant, were brought in the fold in 1978. These UAW inroads in the Sunbelt helped persuade GM to grant the union an automatic recognition proviso in 1979, which should end GM's policy of encouraging runaways to the Sunbelt.

The American Federation of Teachers is coming on strong. About a year ago, some 800 new members signed up in Corpus Christi, Texas, and in October 1979 the AFT won bargaining rights for 4,500 teachers in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The State, County, and Municipal Employees are expanding throughout the Sunbelt, especially in such major cities as Atlanta and Houston, but they will be limited until most states change their collective-bargaining laws for state employees. The building trades' unions so far are gaining few members, but some of the state's building trades' organizations have quickened their interest in the issues of the day. The Texas prevailing wage law is weak, for instance, but when the state legislature tried to slip through a bill abolishing it in 1979, some 10,000 singing building tradesmen marched through Austin, and the effort was quashed.

There is enormous potential for union growth in the Sunbelt, and, in fact, more union representation elections are now being won in Texas than anywhere in the country. There is mounting evidence that the attitudes, laws, and economic factors that hinder unions will change significantly—not immediately, but within a generation.[13] □

[13]Marshall, "Organized Labor," p. 72. Interviews with labor leaders.

Armando Gutiérrez

Hispanics and the Sunbelt

The Spanish-speaking population constitutes the fastest growing minority group in the United States. The annual growth rate for this group is 2.7 percent, a figure that translates into a doubling, within some 25 years, of the present Hispanic population of 15 million. The annual growth rate for blacks is 1.3 percent and for whites only 1 percent. The average age of Chicano women is 19, compared to 30 for Anglo women and 27 for black women. Thus, the average Hispanic woman has some 15-20 years of childbearing ahead of her.

These figures indeed point to a great social and political potential. In the Southwest and California, where 70 percent of the United States' Hispanics live, large influxes of Mexican undocumented workers push the figures up even higher than the official statistics indicate. If for no other reason than the sheer size of the group, Hispanics constitute an important part of life in the Sunbelt. What has happened to this group, how it has experienced the turbulent '60s and recessionary '70s, and what is its present condition—all these are crucial questions that will affect not only the Sunbelt but the entire United States.

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It is important to note that, for the most part, in the Sunbelt, Chicanos do not live in the same states as blacks. Indeed, there is no county in the U.S. that has 25 percent or more of its population made up of Hispanics and a similar proportion of blacks. The nation's two largest minorities tend to be geographically separated. The same condition has also characterized political life. But more about this later.

The socioeconomic condition of the Hispanic community has been dismal, and the persistence of this condition is striking. The economic gap between the nation's white and brown populations has remained remarkably constant throughout the last two decades. A recent study by University of Houston sociologist Tatcho Mindiola demonstrates that even when education is controlled, a substantial gap in income continues to exist between browns and whites.

Median Household Per Capita Income

	1959	1969	1975
Black	$ 690 (.46)	$1303 (.50)	$2263 (.52)
Chicano	742 (.50)	1334 (.51)	2130 (.49)
Majority	1472 (1.0)	2601 (1.0)	4333 (1.0)

SOURCE: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women* (August 1978).

Early Chicano History

CHICANOS OCCUPY a unique position in U.S. political history. The group came to be a part of U.S. society because of an imperialist aggression instigated by this country to expand its borders. Unlike most ethnics who "chose" to immigrate to the United States, Chicanos simply became citizens because of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848. Moreover, Chicanos have maintained constant contact with Mexico. Linguistically, socially, culturally, they have been continually reinforced by heavy immigration from Mexico, both legal and illegal, and so Chicanos have not faced the physical isolation from the mother country that has characterized other groups in the United States. After the cultural renaissance of the 1960s, many Chicanos became acutely conscious of the fact that they had never left their country of origin. The issue of "going back" to the mother country, which concerned segments of the black community in those years, never seriously surfaced in the Chicano movement. Instead, some Chicano groups spoke of the Chicano nation of Aztlan, which is the ancient homeland of the Aztecs and generally considered by anthropologists to have been in what is now the American Southwest.

The history of the Chicano in the United States has been marked by continual exploitation. In Texas alone, following the Mexican-American war, it is estimated that Chicanos were illegally robbed of some 20 million acres of land by judges, lawyers, land speculators, and others. In the labor market of the Southwest, Chicanos have occupied the worst jobs and received the worst pay. Perhaps the most vivid example of oppression is evidenced in their treatment by the Texas Rangers. Horror stories abound about the "open season" on Mexicans that persisted in Texas until well into the 20th century. A 1922 editorial in the *New York Times* stated that ". . . the killing of Mexicans without provocation is so common as to pass almost unnoticed." Even today many Chicanos continue to call for the abolition of the Rangers. Police brutality, too, still is a vital issue, with at least several questionable killings occurring each year.

For the Chicano communities in the Southwest, the geographic location—a 2,000-mile common border with Mexico—has had important beneficial effects in relation to the maintenance of their cultural heritage. Yet, this also has exacerbated the low socioeconomic status of the group. In Texas, for instance, only some 13 percent of the labor force is unionized. Indeed, one of the Sunbelt's major attractions for business has been the low wage and the absence of unions. Organized labor, however, has not been an innocent bystander in this scheme in the Southwest, for many labor unions have routinely discriminated against the Chicano.

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Chicanos and the Last Two Decades

CHICANOS EXPERIENCED THE 1960s in much the same way as did the rest of American society. Civil rights became a watchword, with new organizations sprouting up and old ones redirecting themselves. The Vietnam War, too, struck a deep chord in the Chicano community. And small wonder: even though Chicanos only made up about 3 to 5 percent of the U.S. population in the 1960s, they accounted for 21 percent of the casualties in Southeast Asia. The 1970 Chicano moratorium that was organized in East Los Angeles against the War attracted some 25,000 demonstrators, so far the largest Chicano demonstration in this nation's history.

The 1960s also saw a marked increase in activism among Chicano youth. Such organizations as the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), and the United Mexican American Students (UMAS), all spoke to the concerns of youth. Throughout the Southwest, high-school and even junior-high-school students staged massive walkouts, protesting racism in the schools. In 1969, the National Chicano Youth Conference in Denver, Colorado, adopted the Plan de Aztlan, calling for self-determination—"a nation autonomous and free—culturally, socially, economically and politically. . . ."

Finally, the 1960s saw the dismal plight of Chicano farmworkers come to the forefront with the organizing of Cesar Chavez's United Farmworkers' Union (UFW). This issue dramatically highlighted collusion between public and private sectors in keeping farmwork the most underpaid labor in the U.S. Perhaps the most dramatic manifestation of this collusion came to light at the height of the UFW-instigated grape boycott in the late 1960s. To offset the effects of the boycott, the Defense Department increased its purchase of grapes for U.S. troops in Vietnam from 468,000 pounds in 1966 to well over 4 million pounds in 1969.

From the activism of the 1960s emerged various groups within the Chicano community that now are competing for its political loyalty in the 1970s. One of the most dramatic developments was the emergence in 1970 of the Raza Unida party in Texas. By 1974 the organization had spread to some 27 states and appeared headed for an important and permanent place in the Chicanos' political future. In 1972 its candidate for governor of Texas, Ramsey Muniz, a charismatic young lawyer from Corpus Christi, carried nearly a quarter of a million votes on a shoestring budget. The result was the election of a Democratic governor who was supported by less than a majority of the voters—not insignificant in a Democratic state such as Texas.

Shortly thereafter, and no doubt largely because of the shock given the Democratic party by Raza Unida, there began a much more prominent emergence of middle-class Chicano groups and individuals throughout the Southwest. It is hardly coincidental that the League of United Latin-American Citizens (LULAC), an old-guard, middle-of-the-road, staunchly Democratic organization, which had lost much of its following during the 1960s, once again emerged as a "leader of the Chicano community." Similarly, the American GI Forum, also a moderate to conservative group of middle-class Mexican Americans with a long history of unwavering support for the Democratic party, also achieved a new-found prominence.

Mexican American members of the Democratic party—a group largely consigned to the role of beating the Chicano bushes to get the vote out for non-Chicano Democratic candidates—suddenly found themselves receiving party support for their own candidacies, for everything from city council to state representative, to seats on the Democratic party's state and national steering committees. Such was the "opening of the doors" of the Democratic party (and, in some isolated instances, the Republican party) that the number of Chicanos elected to public office in the Southwestern states increased by some 200 percent between 1972 and 1978. Two Mexican Americans were even elected to governships, Jerry Apodaca in New Mexico and Raul Castro in Arizona. To be sure, both Apodaca and Castro tilted to the right, but the

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simple fact that Chicanos had been "allowed" to win such prominent offices was enough for many Mexican Americans to prove the Democratic party's sincerity.

It is interesting and rather ironic that most of these middle-class Mexican Americans with new-found prominence in the Democratic party readily acknowledged the role of the left generally, and of the Raza Unida party specifically, in forcing the Democrats to open their doors. Yet, by the mid-1970s these same individuals were either directly or indirectly involved in weakening the RUP. By running under the auspices of or by actively supporting the Democratic party, these Mexican Americans were giving the party a legitimacy among Chicanos that had been seriously eroded by the presence of the RUP. In still other instances, Mexican American Democrats publicly extolled the virtues of the Democratic party and the folly of supporting a "radical, Communist," third party. It seems likely that such blasts at the Raza Unida party by Mexican Americans had the effect of simply confusing Chicanos, thus keeping them away from the polls altogether, rather than regenerating support for the Democrats. Nonetheless, the ultimate effect was to weaken the RUP.

Issues in the Chicano Community

A VARIETY OF OTHER ISSUES have captured the attention of the Chicano people over the last two decades. Proposals for increased educational and occupational opportunities have been embraced by virtually all sectors of the Chicano community. Chicano groups from left to right have demanded better jobs, better pay, better benefits for Chicanos. Although the socioeconomic data we have today (we'll be able to speak with much more authority after the 1980 Census data become available) seem to demonstrate that such appeals have had little effect in bettering the overall condition of Chicanos, some progress has been made in at least erecting formal and legal barriers to discrimination.

If any single group in the Mexican American community has been helped by the activism of the last two decades, it has been the middle class. Merchants have made breakthroughs in receiving government contracts, and rules have been liberalized that regulate loans to small businesses in order to start out anew or expand an old enterprise. Now middle-class Mexican Americans are receiving appointments in the local, state, and national bureaucracies, and they have been able to secure some government moneys for their specific agendas. And, as mentioned earlier, Chicanos now also are candidates for public posts within the Democratic and Republican parties. In fact, it may well be, as Robert Allen has argued regarding blacks in his insightful *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* (1972), that the Chicano community is now developing an internal schism based on class—between the middle-class minority and the poor masses. There is some evidence of this development in the recent voting patterns.

Along with the opening-up of occupational opportunities, Chicanos now are grappling with the issue of educational discrimination. It is not surprising, given the emphasis put in the U.S. on education as the key to upward mobility, that the schools and universities have become the scene of militant Chicano activism. Such educational issues as affirmative action, Mexican American studies programs, bilingual education, and culturally biased testing have won support among Chicanos.

College Completion: Social Indicator Values
(Ratios of raw measures to the majority male population)

	1960	1970	1976
Males:			
Blacks	.20	.27	.32
Chicanos	.20	.23	.32
Majority	1.00	1.00	1.00
Females:			
Blacks	.30	.36	.32
Chicanos	.10	.14	.15
Majority	.45	64	.65

SOURCE: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women* (August 1978).

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Although Chicanos still have to make significant progress in achieving educational parity with their Anglo counterparts, it is interesting, and potentially a source of large-scale disaffection, that at precisely the time when university doors are slowly beginning to swing open for Mexican Americans a university degree is becoming less meaningful in the marketplace of labor. Thus, the "promise" long heard in the Chicano community that staying in school and getting a college degree will lead to a "good" job may soon become a cause of unrest for the children of the Mexican American middle class.

Perhaps the most dramatic issue to emerge in the 1970s was that of the Mexican undocumented workers. As the U.S. economy began its periodic downturn in 1972, gaining critical force during the recession of 1974-75, official government channels rediscovered (as had been done countless times in U.S. history) the undocumented worker as a major source of economic problems. Thus, figures of up to 12 million illegal residents in the U.S. began being tossed around in the press by Leonard Chapman, then the director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Chapman put much emphasis on the impact of these workers not only on Chicano labor conditions but also on the general availability of social services to the Chicano community. He argued that at least 1 million jobs would become immediately available, and most of them in the Sunbelt, if all illegals were deported. Even though Department of Labor data indicates that only 4 percent of all undocumented workers have children in the public schools, the issue of their free schooling also aroused much concern. Various lawsuits by school districts sought to affirm their right to charge these children tuition.

With the election of Jimmy Carter, and his subsequent appointment of Lionel Castillo, a Chicano, to head the Immigration and Naturalization Services, the campaign against the undocumented worker escalated to the point where proposals were made for the construction of a razor-sharp fence along the border. Unannounced raids of homes and workplaces also increased. By this time even Cesar Chavez, under extreme pressure from the AFL-CIO, had taken a public stand against the Mexican undocumented worker.

While at first Chicanos appeared to accept the negative impact of illegals, the reversal of Chicano opinion represents one of the more dramatic instances of the effectiveness of the Chicano left. For the left organized a campaign to expose, on the one hand, the history and invidiousness of the American government's efforts to "blame" the illegals for its own inability to solve crucial economic problems, and to cement, on the other hand, a solidarity between Mexican illegals and Chicanos.

By the mid-1970s Chicanos were so suspicious of government proclamations about the undocumented worker that Castillo could not convince them of their veracity. Chavez, too, facing extreme dissension within his union because of his stand on the issue, reversed his position. Thus, the so-called Carter Plan for dealing with the undocumented worker, floated among Chicanos by Castillo, was met with angry demonstrations by Chicanos throughout the country. The fence proposal soon came to be referred to by many Chicanos as the "Karter-Kastillo Kurtain." At present a virtual moratorium has been declared on the issue, probably in part because of Mexico's increased bargaining power, but also because of the Chicano community's hostility toward the issue.

Sociopolitical Institutions Among Chicanos

INSTITUTIONALLY, the Chicanos early on developed an infrastructure of institutions. From their early Mutualistas and fraternal organizations to church-related groups, the Chicanos have long had a relatively elaborate network of institutions.

For the mass of poor Chicanos the Catholic Church continues to play a prominent role. Church-sponsored sociopolitical organizations, such as Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), have been the most successful in organizing this segment of the Chicano people. Thus far, COPS and other, similar organizations have been developed in San Antonio, Houston, El Paso, and Los

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Angeles. These organizations have been most successful in San Antonio and Los Angeles, and have concentrated on improving the delivery of social services to Chicanos.

The driving forces behind these organizations usually have been rank-and-file clergy people. The hierarchy in the Church has for the most part continued to be intransigent in its refusal to deal with sociopolitical issues. Thus, some of the young activist clergy has found itself "exiled" (transferred to another community) because of its involvement in these efforts. To be sure, the efforts of these organizations are largely reformist in nature. Steadfastly nonpartisan, they have concentrated on insuring that services available in the cities' middle-class neighborhoods be extended to the poorer sections. In San Antonio, the one attempt by COPS to extend its power beyond delivery of social-service issues met with failure. In 1976, COPS took the position that only businesses that were willing to pay workers at least $5.00 per hour should be encouraged to relocate in the city. Under pressure from city officials who argued that such demands would simply send companies to other Sunbelt cities, COPS backed off, apparently concluding that low-wage jobs were better than no jobs at all.

Most mainstream social and political activities have been confined to middle-class Chicanos. These efforts—often initiated by such organizations as the League of United Latin-American Citizens, the American GI Forum, Mexican American Democrats, and the Mexican American Chambers of Commerce—have, not surprisingly, been largely effective in helping the Mexican American middle class. So most programs and agencies, ostensibly created to help the poor Chicano, from migrant programs to Model Cities, have hired middle-class Mexican Americans to operate them. The available economic data seems to indicate that the major impact of such progress is to create nicer and more comfortable jobs for those Chicanos who are already living nicely and comfortably.

Unemployment: Social Indicator Value
(Ratios of raw measure to the majority male population)

	1960	1970	1976
Males:			
Blacks	1.83	1.97	2.69
Chicanos	1.72	1.78	1.88
Majority	1.00	1.00	1.00
Females:			
Blacks	1.91	2.33	3.20
Chicanos	2.04	2.53	2.52
Majority	1.00	1.39	1.47

SOURCE: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Social Indicators of Equality for Women and Minorities* (August 1978).

In addition to these two sectors of the Chicano population—the mass of the working class and poor, and the middle class—there is a third group, the growing intelligentsia, which is in a somewhat unique position. Largely a product of the late '60s and '70s, this group was an important beneficiary of the activism of the period—for universities have increasingly opened their doors since that time in response to minority demands. Many Chicanos who have entered the universities, largely from middle-class backgrounds, came out not only with a much more sophisticated critique of American society but also with the desire to help the masses of poor Chicanos.

Yet, the Chicano intellectuals have remained separate from precisely the Chicanos they wish to help. They have not yet been able to translate the ideas formulated in the last two decades into concrete, applicable political tools. Although a good portion of the intelligentsia based in Texas have given their support to the Chicano unification strategy of the Raza Unida party, they have so far been unable to seriously help that organization expand its base. These younger Chicano intellectuals, who have lost much of the ethnic culture and language that had enriched them during their childhood, have now returned to reclaim and demand the fostering of that culture.

The Chicano intelligentsia has largely moved from a colonial analysis of Chicano conditions to a Marxist orientation. The synthesis of the two areas of thought (which many argued should never have been separated) has allowed the larger social,

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political, and economic analysis of the Marxist view to merge with the greater emphasis on race allowed in colonial theory. Yet, even though Chicano intellectual thought has become increasingly sophisticated, it still remains an endeavor with little connection to political life in the Chicano community.

The Decades Ahead

NOW THE CHICANOS ENCOUNTER, at the beginning of the 1980s, a curious mix of phenomena. That they are one of the fastest growing minorities in the United States cannot be disputed. That they are one of the most powerless and ill-treated groups in America is equally evident. But to assume, as many do, that the increasing size of the Chicano population will inexorably lead to a corresponding increase in political power, which in turn will lead to an improvement in Chicano socioeconomic conditions, is truly simpleminded. To begin with the most obvious points, it should be self-evident that blacks *already* have (and have had for quite some time) the numbers and proportion the Chicanos look eagerly forward to reaching. Yet, the black condition in 1980 continues to be dismal. Moreover, the weapon most often pointed to as the tool for increased Chicano power is the vote—and to wield it either in the Democratic or in the Republican party at that.

We must acknowledge that the effectiveness of the vote—despite the mythology of its power—is open to serious questioning. In fact, one study on the effectiveness of the black vote, William Keech's *The Impact of Negro Voting* (1968), concluded that voting had little impact on the overall condition and the delivery of services to blacks. Although this study is now some 12 years old and has been the object of some debate, the point is that the place of the vote in the entire repertoire of political behavior must be thoroughly analyzed by concerned minorities. The vote may well be effective only in conjunction with other displays of political discontent: marches, demonstrations, and so forth.

That Chicanos are not convinced of the vote's effectiveness is suggested by their voting behavior. Thus, despite the continuing liberalization of voting laws (ballots are now being printed in Spanish) and the increased efforts of Chicano middle-class groups to bring out the vote, the Chicano turnout has steadily diminished over the last decade. From a registered voters' turnout of 79 percent in 1960, that turnout has dropped to 48 percent in 1970. The last figure has remained almost constant for the Carter/Ford race in 1976. When one considers that nearly half of the eligible Chicano population is not registered, it becomes clear that only a small portion of Chicanos are going to the polls.

Even though middle-class leaders and politicians have often lamented the low turnout and have pointed to it as evidence of Chicano pathology and a major reason for lack of systemic responsiveness, the black experience seems to call such arguments into question. While this is not to argue that in the areas where the black vote has become a significant bloc—in, for instance, Atlanta, Newark, Detroit—the black vote has had *no* impact; it is to suggest that the vote's impact is limited (particularly for the poor blacks) well beyond that normally described in American political folklore.

It may well be that the estimation of the American political system is inaccurate in regard to the Chicano voter rather than to the nonvoter. At the very least, it must be recognized that such an argument is not to be dismissed altogether. Chicanos, in fact, have already demonstrated their importance in the political arena. As early as 1960 a huge Chicano turnout for John Kennedy gave him important electoral votes in Texas, New Mexico, and in several Midwestern states. Had everything else remained equal, Kennedy would not have won the presidency without the 90 percent plurality of Chicano votes he received. This pattern, particularly at the local and state levels, has been repeated countless times. That few rewards have been forthcoming for anyone but the tiny middle-class sector in the Chicano community is evidenced by the data I have presented earlier.

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There has yet to be any serious political cooperation between blacks and Chicanos. Nor are there any signs that such cooperation is developing. While this may partly be explained by the fact that, in the Sunbelt, the two groups are geographically separated, we must also recognize that they see themselves as competing for limited resources. Thus, many Chicanos regard the limited gains made by blacks in the '60s and '70s as having come at the expense of Chicanos. In some sectors of the Chicano community, this perception has generated a good deal of resentment. It is difficult to conceive of the two groups uniting when they continue to see each other as competitors.

A recent development among Chicanos, and partly tied to the undocumented worker issue, has been the "internationalization" of the Chicano movement. Instead of looking to Washington, D.C. for political benefits and power, some leaders have begun to look beyond the borders of the United States. An ongoing dialogue has now been formalized between various Chicano leaders and Mexican President José Lopez-Portillo. Even before his September 1979 meeting with President Carter, the Mexican President chose to meet with several Chicano leaders. Reies Lopez Tjjerina of New Mexico has met several times with Spanish government officials; Frank Shaeffer-Corona of the Washington, D.C. school board has developed contact with Quebecois, and with Cuban and Nicaraguan officials. The Raza Unida party in 1975 accepted an invitation from Cuba to visit the island. Several leaders of the American GI Forum and LULAC visited with General Torrijos during the Panama Canal treaty debate and lobbied for its passage. Antonio Orendain, leader of the Texas Farm Workers Union, toured Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries in 1978 and was recently invited to Iran during the hostage crisis.

The potential of the Chicano community to seriously affect the social, political, and economic future of the Sunbelt remains just that—a potential. Whether the mechanism to realize that potential lies in the Democratic, Republican, or Raza Unida party, indeed, whether it lies in the vote at all, remains a point of debate. That the United States' political leaders realize the potential significance of this group is evidenced by the large amount of attention given to the group by the intelligence community. Some 6,000 pages of documents released by the FBI, the CIA, and other agencies reveal a series of efforts going back some two decades, both legal and illegal, to monitor and disrupt organized Chicano activity, particularly that of the left.

But, as we enter the decade of the '80s, the Chicano community seems unsure of which way to proceed. At present, in any given election, some 8 of 10 eligible Chicanos will not go to the polls. What is more, apparently they will not register their views in any other visible form either. There have been few demonstrations, walkouts, or strikes of any consequence in the last few years. It is probably somewhere in the mix of the various forms of political behavior that Chicanos will benefit and so advance. Voting, union organizing, demonstrating, marching—such activity will probably all have to be utilized in order to effect change. Yet, it is precisely that segment of the Chicano community most affected by official neglect and/or animosity that seems immobilized. This segment also, undoubtedly, holds the key to the Chicanos' future. If it is mobilized, the United States may be in for quite a shock. □

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Richard Murray

Houston: Politics of a Boomtown

In the fall of 1980 a half dozen huge new office buildings, ranging from trapezoidal to octagonal in shape, are thrusting upward to join Houston's crowded downtown skyline. These edifices, with most of their space already leased to corporate clients, are testimony to the city's continuing economic boom. Houston's robust economy has been creating between 50,000 and 70,000 new jobs each year, which in turn have attracted, throughout the 1970s, some 60,000 to 80,000 newcomers to the area each year. The local population has soared. Harris County (containing the greater part of the local urban area) had 1.2 million people in 1960; it had 1.7 million in 1970, and now has an estimated 2.4 million inhabitants. Per capita income also has shot up in recent years. In 1970 the average family income was 102 percent of the national mean, and by 1977 it was estimated to be 119 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. Mean family income in Houston is now equal to that of New York City, despite the fact that the living cost is about 25 percent lower. It is worth noting, of course, that this economic vitality, rapid population growth, and increasing affluence occur in an era of national economic stagnation and general metropolitan decline.

Houston's boom cannot be explained simply as an example of Sunbelt prosperity contrasted with Snowbelt decline. Recent data show that many Sunbelt cities, such as New Orleans, Memphis, and Los Angeles, have had slow- or no-growth patterns in the 1970s that are consistent with national urban trends. Even some of the boom cities of the 1960s, such as Dallas and Atlanta, have experienced slowdowns of their economies and growth rates in the 1970s. Houston thus represents a unique case; alone among large American cities, it continued to grow as fast in the late 1970s as in the 1950s and 1960s.

The reasons for this uneven pattern of urban development are not difficult to identify. Since the Spindletop gusher blew in 90 miles east of Houston in 1901, the city on the flat coastal plains of the upper Texas Gulf Coast has emerged as a national and international center of the oil and gas industry. At first, this reflected simple proximity; the largest deposits of hydrocarbons in the country were nearby. Later, Houston emerged as the major center for a huge petrochemical manufacturing industry. In recent years, as the technologies required to find, exploit, and manufacture petroleum and natural gas have become more costly and complex, Houston has firmly established itself as the technological service center of the most international industry in the world. Such major American oil companies as Exxon and Shell have concentrated their corporate offices in Houston. The combined effect of these developments is Houston's growth into an essentially one-horse industrial/corporate city, much like Detroit (automobiles) and Seattle (airplanes) have been for many years.

Houston's horse, however, has been a far better steed to ride in the turbulent 1970s than the mounts available to other American cities. To begin with, demand for oil and gas, so far, is extremely inelastic compared to that for cars or airplanes. Demand remains quite strong for these energy sources despite price increases of 800 to 1,000 percent over the last six years for newly discovered crude oil or natural gas. These enormous price increases have, of course, worked great hardships on most of the nation and especially on many of its older cities in the north and east. The effect has been quite the opposite in Houston. Local companies have seen their revenues grow at rates far above the national inflation level (Superior Oil grossed $42 million in 1973,

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compared to $731 million in 1978; Coastal States Gas had revenues of $311 million in 1973 and over $3.8 billion in 1978). Profits are up sharply, not only for companies involved in the production and refining of hydrocarbons, but also for those providing technical and managerial services for the oil and gas industry. In sum, the staggering price increases that OPEC has wrung out of the Western industrialized nations have left Houston, compared to all other American cities, in the catbird's seat.

The health and vitality of Houston's economic base has produced a number of ancillary developments. The city has the largest home building industry in the nation, the greatest amount of general construction activity, and one of the most active and profitable real estate markets. Local bank-holding companies are growing at faster rates than are banks elsewhere, and local law firms are reaching behemoth size (three of the six largest U.S. law firms now are located in Houston). The city has been and remains, for many, a veritable money machine with an almost limitless capacity for enriching (some of) the local inhabitants.

If Houston represents, economically, the last great urban frontier in America, its local politics has an anachronistic quality. A hundred years ago private economic elites in America often dominated local, state, and even national politics and used their power to secure public policies favorable to their personal economic interests. In most American cities such blatant private elite politics has long since been supplanted by a pluralistic political process that features bargaining among various organized interests (ethnic minorities, municipal and craft unions, partisan organizations, and local economic elites) and elected political leaders.

In Houston little of this has come to pass. From the founding of the city in 1836 to the present, effective political power has rested in the hands of local economic entrepreneurs intent on maintaining and promoting policies that protect their personal economic status. The result of this elite control has been, on the one hand, a distinctly conservative government most interested in assuring a low-tax climate at the expense of such human services as parks, hospitals, police protection, and mass transit. But, on the other hand, local elites have pressed hard for big government projects (particularly where costs could be shared with the state or federal government) that were deemed essential to creating or maintaining the conditions for growth and development. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries this was reflected in the effort to get a ship channel dredged for a deep-water port 60 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. In the 1940s and 1950s the Corps of Engineers was pressed to improve local drainage and flood control facilities. In the 1950s and 1960s, the state and federal governments would invest over $1 billion in a freeway system for Houston. Today, hundreds of millions of federal dollars are being used to improve local waste water treatment facilities so the city can continue to issue building permits.

Elite control has been facilitated by a number of circumstances that do not exist in most American metropolitan areas. First, key local policies are largely determined by a single government—the City of Houston. Of the urban populace, 65 percent lives in the city, and another 20 percent resides in Houston's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) where they are subject to annexation at any time by the central city. Other local governments, such as the county, have little general political power. In addition, the city government has effective control over a number of functional units in the area (for example, five of seven members of the Metropolitan Transit Board are appointed by the mayor of Houston).

Power, within the city, is concentrated in a strong mayoral government. The mayor is empowered to hire and fire all department heads; he is responsible for monitoring the performance of the city bureaucracy, retains complete control of budget preparation, and presides over (and votes on) the city council. The city charter envisions the council as a part-time body as reflected in the fact that its support staff consists of a half-time secretary each, and the members' pay was $300 per month (this was increased by the

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1977 Texas legislature). Politically, the council has been further weakened by the fact that its members have had to run at large with the mayor and so do not possess an independent electoral power base. Given these conditions, it is not surprising that the council has usually supported the mayor on major issues and that there has been remarkably little public debate at City Hall about fundamental local policies.

With so much riding on who controls the mayor's office, one might think the occupant would be in a perfect position to build a political machine capable of sustaining his and his supporters' power over time. Yet, this has not been the case, reflecting, in part, a general public antipathy, common to the urban Southwest, toward patronage-based politics. It also reflects the fact that with nonpartisan elections, short campaign periods (30 days from the close of filing to election), and no existing effective political organizations in the city, candidates have to mount ad hoc campaigns that appeal to voter support on an individual basis. In a city as large and spread out as Houston, with its 1.7 million people dispersed over 600 square miles, candidates must run increasingly expensive media campaigns. This requires, of course, tremendous financial support: indeed, the winners in mayoral contests during this decade have had to spend between $750,000 and $1 million to win or hold their office. Such huge sums of money can be raised only from the segment of the local business community that is extremely interested in preserving Houston's boom. This segment does not, interestingly, include much of the oil and gas industry (their political interests now focus largely on national and international politics) but is made up of the land developers and home builders, apartment builders, bankers, lawyers, and realtors—people whose very good livelihoods depend upon a local government that will continue to make the "right" policy decisions.

Aside from financial backing, several other factors have worked to sustain the use of local public power to protect and promote private economic gain. First, mass attitudes have generally not differed much from those of local business leaders—a condition not found in most American cities. Most of Houston's population moved to the city within the last 30 years in the expectation of improving their economic circumstances. The majority of its citizens feel that they have been successful in this respect, and credit the rapid growth of the area as being in their own best interest. A recent poll by the Public Affairs Research Center at the University of Houston (PARC) found that 43 percent of the local populace felt that rapid growth and development in the area was personally beneficial to them, compared to 31 percent that thought it was personally harmful. There is less than the usual gap between local elites and the city's general population because their social origins are similar. The economic and political leaders of the community—the Jesse Joneses, George and Herman Browns, Leon Jaworskis, and John Connallys—were themselves newcomers to the city and had come from modest rural and small-town backgrounds. In this regard they mirrored the origins of the largest segment of Houston's citizenry: native, white Southerners.

This fact largely explains why Houston's politics does not have the ethnic overtones associated with large cities. Historically, Houston has been very much a Southern city, which meant that its populace could be divided into a majority white segment that was quite homogeneous (mostly Protestant, largely from surrounding rural areas, Democratic in partisan leanings) and a minority black underclass that was effectively excluded from political participation until after World War II. Even after blacks had become politically active, their influence was held in check by the city's ability to annex new white suburban areas, which offset increased minority voting in the central city.

Houstonians, as a whole, exhibit little interest in local political matters. Relatively few people work in the local public sector (the City of Houston employs 16,000 people compared to a quarter of a million city employees in New York). Then, too, many Houstonians, who are newcomers, have little understanding of or interest in local issues or candidates. Just 28 percent of the registered voters (or 16 percent of the adult population)

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voted in the November 1979 city election, which is a rather typical turnout. By comparison, over 70 percent of the registered voters of New Orleans went to the polls in the 1978 city election in which Ernest Morial became the first black mayor elected in the history of the Crescent City. In Houston, local voter passivity reflects the widespread feeling in this sprawling, amorphous city that ordinary citizens have little or no influence over public affairs. The PARC poll mentioned earlier found, for example, that 52 percent of the local population thought "a few important people" made all the public or governmental decisions in Houston, while 14 percent felt that the "public at large" had a significant say in these decisions. People were asked, "How much influence do you feel you and your neighbors and friends have in determining what public decisions are made in this area?" Only 6 percent said a lot, 27 percent said some, and 65 percent said little or no influence.

What all this adds up to is, first, that the livelihood of an unusually large element of the elite in the local economy is dependent on sustaining rapid growth. Developers, builders, realtors, bankers, big-firm lawyers, architects, engineers—the economic interests of all these groups dovetail into the propositions that the business of Houston is growth, that growth is good for all, and that government has a responsibility to facilitate growth in every possible way. These related economic interests constitute a loose but very real establishment that has been singularly successful in securing its principal objectives. The result has been a long string of mayors and city councils that have been most amenable to what the Houston Chamber of Commerce would characterize as "responsible" public positions.

The current occupant of the mayor's office, Jim McConn, is solidly part of this tradition: he is a former president of the local home builders' association and has impeccable progrowth credentials. McConn was elected in 1977 and reelected in November 1979, and has presided over a city council that responded faithfully to the establishment's needs. This was reflected in small matters, such as the council's routine rejection, in August 1979, of an ordinance that would have prohibited builders' use of wood shingles (which would constitute undue interference with the developers' sector). That vote turned out to be a bit embarrassing; even as it was being tallied, a firestorm fed by dry wood shingles was roaring through Woodway Square, a 1,000-unit luxury apartment complex on the west side of town. The city council was no less responsive to the mayor's proposals on bigger items, such as a push for legislative and voter approval of a new transit authority—to be financed by a huge local tax base—to tackle Houston's worsening transportation problems. City government's support of this issue was based less on new concern for the great problem of the area's poor—who now are dependent on an incredibly bad public bus system for moving around the huge city—but more on the recognition that if transit problems aren't attended to, the entire growth and development of the area might soon be strangled.

Despite the consistency of recent public policies, there are indications that the growth and development elite's hold on city government is weakening. And in this there is a certain irony, because it has been the very sustained growth itself that has undermined the conditions that facilitated establishment control.

Specifically, recent population growth has reduced the sociocultural homogeneity that so long characterized the local white residents. Recent newcomers are as likely to come from Boston or Dayton as from Lufkin, Texas, and with this diversification has come a loosening of social and political values nurtured in the rural and small-town South of the early 20th century. If any dominant political culture can be identified in new exurbs like the Woodlands, which are growing on the periphery of the metropolitan area, it surely is an American hybrid. Beyond this diversification among whites, the local boom has attracted a tremendous influx of Hispanics from economically depressed areas in other parts of Texas and Mexico. In 1950

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only 5 percent of the local population had Spanish surnames; today 16 percent of the city's inhabitants are Hispanics. The local political system must now contend with two large and increasingly active minority communities—blacks and Hispanics—that press their demands in the political arena.

Aside from creating a more heterogeneous population, rapid growth has directly led to a number of logistic problems that are creating public pressures for the pursuit of new and different local policies. As mentioned earlier, because of the continuous population growth in the 1970s, Houston's transportation system, essentially a private car/freeway-street system, has become inadequate. The freeway system was largely completed by 1973, but since then as many as 75,000 new vehicles have been added on the roads, on an annual basis.

New development has largely occurred in raw land areas, and this has disturbed watersheds and contributed to major flooding problems in developed areas downstream. And as the city took in more land and people, the thin base of services was stretched to the breaking point. Basic social indicators show a local population under considerable stress. The number of divorces in Houston equals the number of marriages; the crime rate has soared; and as many as 700 Houstonians were murdered in 1979 (up from about 500 in 1978).

Houston's growing pains are evident in a new, more critical public mood toward local officials and traditional policies. Even in the older, white middle-class neighborhoods that customarily lined up behind candidates supported by the business establishment, there now is a growing concern about the long-term direction of the community, about whether growth and development is really in the best interest of the present population. This dissatisfaction emerged in the 1979 mayoral election when Louis Macey, a maverick councilman with very limited funds and organizational backing, took 44 percent of the vote in the November 20, 1979, runoff with incumbent Jim McConn. Macey, whose campaign stressed the need to improve the quality of life in Houston, won majorities in most white middle-class areas.

Not only is public support for longtime policy goals eroding, but the structure of governance that gave economic elites great influence has also been modified. The U.S. Justice Department ruled, in the summer of 1979, that Houston could continue to annex white suburban areas only if it substantially modified its system of electing all eight council members at large. This action, which was sought by a diverse coalition of disgruntled Houstonians—ranging from suburbanites angry about being annexed without their consent to blacks and browns who wanted inner-city minority districts—resulted in the adoption of a new council plan whereby nine members would be elected from specific districts and five at large. The November 1979 election was the first held under this new system. While it is too early to say just how this realigned council will work, the election results indicate that things will never be quite the same again in Houston.

To begin with, the new council will be the most diverse in the history of the city. The 14 members will include 3 blacks (up from one), a Hispanic (the first in the city's history), and two white females (also historic firsts). A majority of the members are new to City Hall (8 out of 14), and most come to the council with professional political credentials. While ideologically diverse, several of these new members have won their seats despite the opposition of establishment interests, and all are much more outspoken than their predecessors.

The increasingly diverse local population, the changing public attitudes, and a new structure of governance do not by any means assure that a new day has dawned in Houston politics. Local business elites still control enormous financial resources that weigh heavily in competitive politics; the powerful office of the mayor is in the hands of an unabashed prodeveloper; and the local public bureaucracies remain most responsive to establishment pressures. But at a minimum, the city that prides itself on being the "golden buckle of the Sunbelt" seems to be slowly moving from the politics of the 19th to the politics of the 20th century. □

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- ⊕ published this debate on tax policy between Michael Harrington and Representative Jack Kemp and produced a videotape of it
- ⊕ planned a four-day conference for December 1980 to allow labor and socialist leaders from Europe to meet with their American counterparts to exchange views on the crises of productivity, underinvestment, unemployment, stagflation and the like.

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